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HISTORICAL, LITERARY, TRAVEL  
AND MISCELLANEOUS

THE COLLECTED PAPERS  
OF  
SIR A. W. WARD

VOLUME THREE  
LITERARY (i)

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COLLECTED PAPERS  
HISTORICAL, LITERARY, TRAVEL  
AND MISCELLANEOUS

BY

SIR ADOLPHUS WILLIAM WARD

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MASTER OF PETERHOUSE

VOLUME THREE

LITERARY (i)

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AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1921

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AND MISCELLANEOUS



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SIR ADOLPHUS WILLIAM WARD

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MASTER OF PETRUS

VOLUME THREE

LITERARY (II)

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# COLLECTED PAPERS

## LITERARY

### I. *THE SHIP OF FOOLS*

*Fasciculus Joanni Willis Clark Dicatus.* Cambridge, 1909.

THE chapter in the history of the Renaissance in which *The Ship of Fools* figures conspicuously is doubtless neither its most brilliant nor its most fascinating phase. The sphere into which we are here admitted is no hallowed grove, remote from the coarse and crass outer world, like that in which the Academicians of Florence lent ear to the celestial teachings of Diotima—no Court of artificial charm and perfumed atmosphere such as that in which Francis I was fain to pose as president. Yet the chapter in question is full of interest, as telling of sustained efforts made by a combination of serious and high-minded, devout and patriotic men; and the work which more fully than any other illustrates and attests the spirit that animated them holds a place altogether its own in the story of European letters. This place it conquered for itself by no high or rare literary merits. It derives no vitality from any imaginative power, such as informs some of the favourite poetic creations of the Middle Ages, and it is consecrated by no mystic enthusiasm of the kind which, in the most cherished of their devotional manuals, appeals at the same time to the profoundest weakness and to the

loftiest aspirations of men. And yet, by the generation which greeted it with a welcome uttered in common by Germans and English, by French and by Dutch, as well as by those who could only make acquaintance with it in its cosmopolitan Latin garb, *The Ship of Fools* was thought as entertaining as *Reynard the Fox*, and hardly less edifying than the *Imitatio Christi*. No other work of profane literature, at all events, exercised so extensive and lasting an influence as this upon the Reformation age, in which the religious and the political life of the West were alike transformed. The popularity of the work may be safely asserted to have greatly exceeded that of any other didactic poem—the species of literature to which it belongs—ever written in a European tongue. Its allegorical machinery (if so rough a design is to be called by so technical a name) is as simple and as slight as that of the *Roman de la Rose*, the favourite allegory of the preceding century, is ingenious and elaborate; but it hit the popular fancy so exactly that the remembrance of it has survived with the freshness of a proverb, while the scheme of the French poem cannot be recalled without an effort even by professed literary students. Nevertheless, no student will require any great equipment of learning in order to discover that *The Ship of Fools* is, both in substance and in detail, anything but original; and very few readers will be ashamed to confess, before they have done with the book, that it is extremely dull. Every book, we know, has a fate of its own; but it was not chance that made the fortune of the masterpiece of Sebastian Brant.

The name of the author of *The Ship of Fools* is intimately associated with those of two cities almost



equally illustrious in the history of the Renaissance and the Reformation, and alike eloquent in their very stones of the imperishable glory of their past. The Rhine was a free river, as it flowed past the parapets of Basel and the mightier defences of Strassburg; and only below the latter city it began to become the "priests' lane," as it pursued its course through a series of nine great spiritual principalities. Free citizens took their ease on the banks of its green waters in the venerable Swiss city and in the silver "pride of Elsass," not yet torn from the Empire by fraud, to be long after restored to it by force. In and between these two famous cities—in a region which, from the Roman times onwards, had in intellectual culture been in advance of all other German lands, and which had at no previous period been so eager to add new achievements to the associations of the past—the whole of Sebastian Brant's life was spent. He was born at Strassburg, where he was afterwards to end his days in the honourable post of Clerk to the Council of the Free and Imperial City, and where his sepulchral tablet in the University Library is one of the few monuments which survived the bombardment of 1870. He was the son of a citizen and vintner—like the great English poet who, fourscore years before Brant's famous work was produced, had in very different fashion depicted the varied company of men and women that find themselves seated at the ordinary of everyday life.

The year of Brant's birth was 1458—about the period when the Greek fugitives from Constantinople were in Italy stimulating a new zeal in the prosecution of classical studies, and when in Germany books of

superior size and importance were first issuing from the still mysterious source of the printing-press. Brant's own native Elsass was only beginning to enter into the movement in which it was to play so early and active a part. Strassburg itself had as yet no public school; and there is no evidence to show that Brant received any part of his education in the seminary of the neighbouring Schlettstadt, where the Westphalian Dringenberg, who had been at Zwolle in the time of Thomas a Kempis, was headmaster, and where Geiler von Kaisersberg and the illustrious Jacob Wimpheling were pupils. The tradition that in Brant's case the want of school training was largely made good by maternal care suggested to the ingenious writer who enlarged the original *Ship of Fools* by some very good additions of his own a touching allusion to the supposed fact; and certainly no part of Brant's moral teaching is more impressive than that in which he dwells on the effects of parental example. Besides a later section in the text—"Honour father and mother"—in which we read how, when his mother came into his presence,

King Solomon

Rose reverently from his throne—

there is an admirable discourse near the commencement of the poem "On the teaching of children," and on the folly of leaving unbent the young twig while it still readily yields to disciplinary pressure. The young Sebastian, we may feel sure, was brought up very differently from the young scapegraces who, in one of the excellent woodcuts illustrating the original edition of the poem, are shown at fisticuffs over a table littered with cards and dice, while the father fool sits by,



blindfolded, and with a feeble grin of satisfaction on his face at the high spirits of those dear boys. For the rest, it is just possible, though hardly quite proved, that Brant received part of his education at Baden—a place whose name, a generation ago, would have only too vividly recalled our author's section *On Gamesters*. Indeed—so little do the outward features of vice change with the centuries, that Madame de Cruchecassée and her bedizened crew are brought to mind by Brant's angry apostrophe to the women who boldly take their seats at the table with the men, there to

Rattle the dice early and late,  
Forgetful of their proper state.

But, in any case, neither Baden nor even Strassburg was the real seminary of Sebastian Brant's mental and moral growth. In the year 1475 the young Alsatian matriculated in the University of Basel—already celebrated, though it had not yet completed the first quarter of a century of its existence, and though nearly half a century was to pass before Erasmus, still at the height of his literary powers, but no longer in the van on the struggle with which his name had been identified, had taken up his residence in its midst. The old *régime* in the world of intellectual effort and spiritual endeavour was still far from being at an end, and still further from seeming so to the well-nurtured lad who at Basel first addressed himself to the twofold study which he pursued through life—the study of books and of men.

I do not know whether the young Sebastian Brant ever beheld at Basel that famous mural painting on which many of us have gazed there, and which, of

course, is only one of a great number of similar medieval treatments of the same theme—teaching all men two lessons not usually blended together—the lesson of equality and the lesson of humility. The author of *The Ship of Fools* was certainly well acquainted with the fancy to which he unmistakably alludes in the section “Of not taking thought of death.” “Death,” he says, “makes us equal, one and all”:

His summons to the dance obey  
Pope, Emp’ror, King, bishop and lay.

Each has to take part in the *Gzolter*—an untranslatable word which seems to signify a sequence of dancers as in the *Polonaise* of our youth—and to join in whatever *pas* (one or two popular varieties are instanced) is piped to the company. It must not be supposed that there is any lurking secondary intention in this acknowledgment of the power of the Universal Leveller, any more than in the subsequent reference to the useless pomp of mausoleums and pyramids—

Full many a corpse the heavens alone  
Cover *sans* monumental stone;  
And who could better wish to lie  
Than ’neath a star-lit canopy?

But the melancholy cadence of this section of the poem, as well as the grim fancy of the dance in which young and old, high and lowly, must perforce take part, well suited the times into which Sebastian Brant was born, and in which there was enough, and more than enough, to remind even Emperors and Popes that they were mortal.

The Emperor who for all but the entire later half of the 15th century held sway over Germany—the



last Roman Emperor ever crowned at Rome—was Frederick III, the very incarnation of impotence, and recognised as such by the Empire at large. Until, just a year before the publication of *The Ship of Fools*, his son Maximilian I, whose splendid marriage with the Burgundian heiress his ill-starred, and at times all but lackland, sire had of late been in the habit of discounting, like a bankrupt father in domestic drama, had succeeded him on the Imperial throne. The beginning of a new reign is always a time, however short, of hopefulness, however unwarranted. Not for want of will, but for want of power, the Emperor Frederick had remained absolutely inactive in the face of the awful danger threatening Germany and the whole of central Europe from the constant and, as it seemed, irresistible advance of the Turk; and, after the capture of Constantinople seemed to have inflicted its deathblow upon Eastern Christendom, without the arm of the chief of Western Christendom being raised in its defence, he had been reduced to begging money—practically in vain—from the discordant Estates of the Empire for the defence of its own frontier. When, in 1493, Maximilian at last became Emperor, the time seemed at last to have arrived for the impossible to become possible—for the Turks to be hurled back and the Empire to be united. Maximilian was one of those gifted men whose whole life's course is paved with good intentions and great designs, but in whose case posterity, which must apply the standard of achievement, cannot be expected to accord the measure of sympathetic admiration bestowed upon them by their contemporaries. He neither wrote the whole of his own poetry nor controlled the conduct of

his own wars—chiefly because he lacked time to accomplish the one thing and money to manage the other. The record of his life's work is fragmentary; one of the most untoward incidents of his reign was that defection of the Swiss from the Empire which drove the loyal author of *The Ship of Fools* home from Basel to his native Strassburg.

Of this political background no attentive reader of the work is likely to lose sight. In *The Ship of Fools*, as, in fact, in every book or broadsheet of the age, the terrible Turk's head will be found thrusting itself in, while a cry of lamentation goes up to Heaven for the four lost sisters of the Church of Rome—the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Antioch. Yet, says the poet—filled with the thought of the new Crusade, for the successful prosecution of which there was in truth nothing wanting except men and money—the ship may yet sail a straight course, if only due support is given to the noble Prince, Maximilian; when there shall

Fall without fail into his hand  
The sacred soil, the promised land.

Still, the tone of the section "Of the defection of Faith" is far from being enthusiastically hopeful; the author's eyes are not closed to the obstacles in the way of the fulfilment of his desires; for he knows the indispensable condition for victory over the Infidel—unity among Christian Kings and peoples,

I hope to God, it may be so.

One of the most notable attempts—indeed it may be described as the most notable of the period—to unite



the Princes and peoples of Christendom in a great defensive Crusade had been made, immediately after his accession to the Chair of St Peter, by the Pope who had been elected in the very year of the birth of Maximilian I and of Sebastian Brant. In this attempt, Pius II, one of the most intelligent though by no means one of the greatest of Roman Pontiffs, had failed—largely because of suspicions connected with his diplomacy as an agent of the Curia before his own elevation to the Roman See. The great service which, in the judgment of Rome, Æneas Sylvius had then rendered to her interests had been to help to undo in a large measure the results of the Council of Basel—the last of the three great Councils of the Church which the nations had hoped to see bring about a real reform of her from within. Such had been the mighty impulse of Union, that this Council had even undertaken to effect the reconciliation of the Hussites to the Church—nay, even to bridge over the gulf which had for centuries separated Eastern from Western Christianity. While the latter design remained an unfulfilled dream, the Hussites in the end only secured their recognition as an independent religious body by the fearful Wars which carried fire and sword through a large number of the towns and villages of the Empire. To the generation of Brant's manhood the followers of Hus were odious heretics—doubly odious, because for the time successful in enforcing the demands of their non-conformist conscience. The orthodox author of *The Ship of Fools* unhesitatingly classes the Hussites among those whom his English translator Barklay describes as “straunge Folys and infydels such as sarasyns, paynems, turkes and suche

lyke," but who in the original are, with equally significant brevity, termed "foreign fools" *simpliciter*. In the woodcut accompanying this section, the artist, evidently moved by what would in modern Germany be called Anti-Semitic tendencies, has represented one of the number, clearly a Jew, as depending from a gibbet—and, indeed, Brant's native city had taken its share in hunting down the unhappy Jews in the days of the Black Death, when the most deadly suspicions fell upon them. In the section of the poem itself, however, there is nothing about the Jews, but a reference to

the school of heresy,  
Which the fools' chair doth occupy  
At Prague, and now hath further yet  
Over Moravia spread its net.

Like a true academical German of his age, Brant probably abhorred the Hussites as Bohemians hardly less than as heretics; elsewhere, in a very striking passage, he illustrates the omniscience of God by averring that, though neither a Bohemian nor a Tartar, He yet understands their tongues.

Not only had the Council of Basel failed to bring these schismatics home into the fold; but, largely through the adroitness of the future Pope Pius II, the Papacy had contrived so entirely to hold its own, that of the decrees of the great assembly nothing of importance had survived save the confirmation of a hitherto doubtful dogma—that Immaculate Conception of which Brant was afterwards to be an ardent supporter,—and a few more or less durable compactates. "Merry Basel," as Pius II had himself once called it in one of his literary excursions, had therefore been the scene



of very interesting transactions, when in 1460 this very Pope founded a University there—as in a city of commanding celebrity. It is not surprising, therefore, that, in an age of Universities old and new, Basel, lying midway between Germany, France and Italy, should have at once become a widely acknowledged seat of intellectual activity.

Enough has been said to suggest under what general conditions the group of scholars and divines formed itself at Basel, of whose views and sentiments the author of *The Ship of Fools* was to become the most popular and the longest-lived literary exponent. Its central figure was the famous Johannes a Lapide (Johann Heynlin von Stein)—the Latinisation of whose name suggests the remark, that the popularity of Sebastian Brant as a writer in the German vernacular may perhaps account for the circumstance of his being very rarely mentioned by the Latin equivalent for his name which he appropriated—*Titio*, a rather out-of-the-way word signifying a brand. Johannes a Lapide is known in the history of philosophical controversy as one of the most active combatants in a late, but not altogether unimportant, stage of the great contest between Realism and Nominalism. It is well known how, in different countries, these rival schools of thought had by more or less subtle processes come to connect themselves closely with parties mutually adverse in Church and State. But in Germany, as in France, Nominalism had by the middle of the 15th century become thoroughly identified with the national opposition to Rome; and under her influence the truth had at last been definitively established at Paris by an ordinance against Nominalism *de par le Roi* (1473),

which left the chairs of its professors vacant at the Sorbonne, and padlocked its text-books. The victory (though it was quite short-lived and perhaps did more harm to the Realists than to their opponents), was for the moment complete; and the German "nation" in the University of Paris (which included Englishmen and Scandinavians in addition to Low and High Dutch), being mainly Nominalist in its opinions and sympathies, of a sudden found itself tongue-tied.

The success of the Realists at Paris (though it was to prove temporary only) was such as to lead at once to fresh endeavours. Johannes a Lapide, who had actively contributed to the result at Paris, now made his appearance at Basel, with the purpose of there fighting the same battle over again. It is unnecessary to follow the course which the controversy hereupon ran at Basel, where, after many years, it ended unfortunately for Johannes a Lapide. He retired into a monastery, where he afterwards died—Sebastian Brant, it is said, being the only person not resident within the convent walls who was admitted to the death-bed of the great Realist divine. In Johannes a Lapide there passed away the leading spirit of that circle of Renaissance thinkers and writers which, as everything tends to show, included the author of *The Ship of Fools*. One of the Master's most distinguished followers, Jacob Wimpheling, afterwards wrote of him in these words: "Like a true champion of the faith, he always stood armed *cap-a-pie* in the fray, and fought out many a hard fight—but in his heart he was always inclined to peace. His life's work was blessed to him. He never took a book or a pen into his hand without having previously collected his



thoughts by offering prayer before God. The Holy Scriptures he had read and meditated so often that he almost knew them by heart. His soul was pure, like a child's; to play with children was his favourite recreation, when he felt exhausted by a long spell of work."

Yet Johannes a Lapide was one of the most zealous and influential among the early promoters of Humanistic studies; Paris owed him her first printing-press, and he was looked up to as their preceptor by Reuchlin, the man of three languages and the hero (rather against his will) of the great battle against the Obscure Ones, and by Agricola, "the second Vergil," who was wont to express a hope that in time Germany would be quite as Latin as Latium itself. Johannes a Lapide's follower Sebastian Brant was, likewise, a Humanist and a teacher of Humanity; his Latin poems are many in number and have that pleasing sameness to which few devotees of the art of writing Latin verse aspire in vain.

But, though Wimpheling and Agricola, and the future great pulpit-orator Geiler von Kaisersberg, and Sebastian Brant, and their revered Master, and the rest of the group of Germans who surrounded him at Paris and at Basel, were as scholars or as "poets" in sympathy with classical learning and scholarship, they thought this reconcilable with adherence to the old traditions in Church and State, and even in University life. As teachers, preachers and writers, this aftergrowth of the Realists appealed to the old authorities that had satisfied their predecessors; as politicians, they were full of the conception—so old as to have become new again—of a strong Imperial authority; and in matters ecclesiastical they were (in a word) thoroughly Ultra-

montane—willing and anxious to see the authority of the Pope lifted even above that of the Emperor himself. Yet these men are not mere dull conservatives for conservation's sake. There is among them a readiness, not indeed to accept the world as it is, but to deal with its defects as that which it is their duty to study and, so far as in them lies, to cure. The evils of society are such that their inclinations are altogether averted from it; while their eyes turn wistfully to retreats, such as some of them actually found and others were near finding. But, so long as they are sojourners in the world, they will, in great things and in small, manfully set themselves to their task of improving it. Accepting authority as from God, they will display an inflexible rigour against all social and moral licence and impurity and iniquity; in principle the Highest of Churchmen, they are in questions of practice the very Puritans of the Church of Rome. Or is it not the very spirit of Puritanism which speaks out of such passages as that in which the author of *The Ship of Fools* refuses to draw a distinction between the sinfulness of little and the sinfulness of great sins—as if God's justice could be bargained or made terms with:

Who speaks of God as merciful,  
And not as just and terrible,  
He is a fool unspeakable.

We may now, perhaps, have formed some notion of Sebastian Brant's times and training. He was (as I have said) a classical scholar of some mark and a successful "poet" (i.e. writer of Latin verse); he was also an assiduous Italian scholar, to whom the world owes the first collective edition of the works of Petrarch.



By his cooperation in the production of the great Basel Concordance to the Bible he had proved his diligent study of the Scriptures; although his own professional avocation and the field of his University teaching had been the Law—that Roman Law which was about this time establishing its supremacy in the Empire. He seems, moreover, to have had a thorough acquaintance (such as at these times was much valued by literary men) with the technicalities of the printing-press. To be able to handle proofs was then an art; and many eminent scholars spent a considerable part of their literary life in “reading” and “correcting” for the printers. (Gradually, no doubt, the accomplishment grew common enough. In *The Ship of Fools* Brant indicates his opinion that for a University man run to seed the two most suitable callings are that of a printer and that of a tavern-waiter. We shall see immediately that Brant probably knew not less about engraving than about printing—indeed, it is held by some that the woodcuts, which did almost as much as the text to make *The Ship of Fools* universally popular, were in part his own handiwork.) Learned, then, in the best learning that his age could supply, but at the same time unburdened by the faintest doubts as to the truth of his religious beliefs and the soundness of his religious convictions—such we may believe Brant to have been when he began his work as a popular teacher—not ill-equipped for the task which, with a self-certainty such as often reveals genius, he had deliberately set himself.

Whether or not parts or sections of *The Ship of Fools* had already been put forth by Brant before he published the book as a whole in the year 1494, it is

certain that many a flying sheet from his hand had before then been launched upon the world, probably with the assistance of the same wealthy friend (Bergmann von Olpe) who glorified his printing-press by the careful and costly production of *The Ship of Fools*. Even before its merits were known, the publication of such a book, ample in design, telling in title, and elaborate in execution, must have at once announced itself as an important event in the world of letters.

I have described the book, in the first instance, as ample in design. For it is manifestly intended to be at once a mirror of society as it exists and a manual of the principles on which it should be reformed. The wisdom of both sacred writers and profane, but more especially that of the former, is laid under contribution; and, with effective diversity and in overpowering abundance, its whole warning, threatening, prophetic force is brought to bear upon the failings, the foibles, and the vices of mankind. And this is to be done in such a way as to come home to the business and bosoms of every honest burgher in the land—I say of every burgher, because the great middle class is obviously the public which the author has more especially in view. He is devoid of any courtliness of tone or ornateness of style such as might have sought to woo the attention of a more select audience, and he nowhere either rushes into the impassioned eloquence or lapses into the coarse buffoonery which at once gains the goodwill of the multitude. In a steady, businesslike way he goes seriatim through his black list—as in a catalogue of sins drawn up for the ear of the confessor, or as in a *manuel des péchés* which exhaustively classifies its materials, without leaving any



convenient gaps through which a favourite sin may slip.

The design of the book was therefore ample, though not in itself new, and in its most essential features familiar even to classical antiquity. Yet its author had wit as well as wisdom, and knew that, before you can impress your public, you must catch it. Brant we may take to have been a professor born, pleased with the uninterrupted sound of his own voice, and feeling himself in his proper place when exhorting at his ease—with time for deft allusion and apt quotation—*ex cathedrâ*. But he knew that even a manual of social—and to some extent political—morality such as he contemplated must for its success largely depend upon its *form*. And in the case of his poem, the work might almost be said to have been half done when he had chosen its title—*The Ship of Fools*.

Nothing, of course, could have been further from Sebastian Brant's purpose than to invest his catchword *Narr* (our *Fool*) with the specific meaning which French wit has attached to the corresponding word *Sot*. The gay mockery which underlies this genuinely French conception of folly would have been quite unintelligible to the grave German moralist, himself in his way a product of the very period and school whose self-delusions the French Renaissance, as personified in Rabelais, so humorously mocked. The great people of Fools, says Michelet, has received notable accessions from the Academy, from the Bar, from literature, from Parliamentary government—but its true cradle was the age of Scholasticism and the school of the Realists. Sebastian Brant had in view a very different kind of

folly from either that which Rabelais ridiculed, or that of which Erasmus wrote a sarcastic panegyric.

It is clear whence our author derived the notion of treating all human sin and weakness as the products at once and proofs of *folly*, and of speaking of those who are guilty thereof as *fools*. The half bitter, half kindly irony of the Bible term had already before Brant been adopted by medieval writers, while it had had something of a counterpart in the diction of classical antiquity. "The Fool hath said in his heart: There is no God." "Thou Fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." It is not of course to be supposed that in Brant, any more than in the Bible itself, a meaning which would properly be called humorous attaches itself to this metaphorical use of the word *fool*. It is true that we find Brant telling his friend Geiler von Kaisersberg how, when he beholds the vain delights and cares of the crowd, he takes refuge in the unextinguishable laughter of Democritus; but, as a French critic has observed, this must be interpreted very far from literally; and, even supposing that readers of *The Ship of Fools* may have occasionally been moved to laughter in reading the poem, its author, of a certainty, never laughed in writing it. On the other hand, we must remember that to people living in the later Middle Ages the idea of a fool was anything but an abstraction; inasmuch as every Court and every household of consequence had its concrete fool—with cap and bells and the other paraphernalia of his office—to be a *memento stultitiae* to others—the reverse, as it has been well put, of every wise and virtuous obverse in life, as afterwards in literature. Indeed, pictorial instances are to be found



of earlier date than the excellent woodcuts illustrating Brant's poem, in which fools, according to the pregnant Biblical use of the word, appear decorated with the professional cap and bells. Thus, then, the allegory easily pointed itself to the dullest eye. The cap *fits* with equal appropriateness every successive concrete representation of human frailty or obliquity. It bedecks the covetous man and the prodigal; it looks out of the window over the smiling countenance of the vain-glorious fool whose house is on fire in the basement storey beneath; it wags on the poll of the gibing fool who chivies the messenger of good doctrine out of the city; its asses' ears nod upon the babbler who lies serenely like Bottom in the arms of Titania; it gracefully droops from the frizzled curls of the young fool who has married the old woman for her riches. How its bells jingle in the foolish company that passes its time in dances and leaps immoderate round the golden calf; how they clatter in unison with the noisy tongues which know not how to keep reverential silence in the choir; how pendulously the cap sways to and fro with the drunkard, as he hugs the wine-jugs with tearful affection; how triumphantly it surmounts the trembling carcass of the fool who has despised and made no provision for death, and has now started on his last journey in company with a wellknown grim skeleton.

But Brant was not content with a mere series of fools. In a moment of inspiration he invented for his collection a joint name, which has secured immortality for itself, whatever may be the fate of the book which bears it. I have called the device of the *Ship* of fools a mere name; for in truth it is little more. But perhaps

I may let the author introduce it in his own words, or rather in those of his English translator, Alexander Barklay. There can be no harm in occasionally using his version where it fairly reproduces the sense of the original, rather than inflicting on the reader all too bald a translation of my own. At the same time, it should be pointed out that "pregnant Barklay," as he is called by a contemporary, had many excellent qualities as a translator, but not that of confining himself with scrupulous accuracy to his text, while occasionally he manipulates it in a way that would have deeply shocked the orthodox Sebastian Brant<sup>1</sup>.

The Prologue, then, to the poem was originally adorned by a double woodcut—one half of which exhibited a waggon full of fools, while the other showed forth one large ship and several small, heavily freighted with the same sort of company. To the general title was appended the facetious legend: "Bound for *Narragon*." Below was to be read this garbled and

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Barklay, a Scotchman by birth, seems to have been a Franciscan monk in the early part of Henry VIII's reign, but, soon after Luther's declaration of his opinions, to have become one of the advanced guard of the German Reformer's English sympathisers. He survived just long enough to receive substantial preferment under Edward VI, and it is therefore manifest why he cannot be always depended upon as faithfully reproducing the sentiments of an author who would have gone to the stake rather than accept a favour from such a Government. Of course, Henry VIII is Barklay's hero; and he was at least fortunate in having to choose one who, at the beginning of his reign (Barklay's English verse translation of the *Ship of Fools* was published in December, 1509), was quite as popular in England as Maximilian was in Germany on his accession to the Imperial throne.



misapplied quotation from the Psalms: "[These are] they that go down to the sea in ships; that do business in great waters...They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end." A few words follow of lamentation over the wickedness of the world at a time when Scripture is within anyone's reach. Brant had special cause for dwelling on the circulation of Holy Scripture among a thankless generation, since, during the decade (or eleven years) in the course of which *The Ship of Fools* appeared, not less than nine editions of the Bible were published in a single printing-establishment at Basel. The world, he proceeds, is out of joint; and the fools have become

a sorte almost innumerable

Defilyng the worlde with syn and Vylany.

What is to be done with such a crowd, so composed, which fills all streets and passages? Let us get a fleet ready to ship them off—together with any and every sort of vehicle in which they can be stowed away! No sooner said than done: in Barklay's lively version

The sayles ar hawsed, a pleasant cole dothe blowe;

but whither—to what Utopia or Kennaquhair—the fleet or ship (for the fleet becomes a ship before the Preface is at an end) is bound, we are not told; and in the course of the poem we are only incidentally reminded of the machinery of ship, fleet, and waggons, by means of which it was got under way. The chapters describing and discussing the several kinds of fools succeed one another without any external links of con-

nexion, till we reach a late stage of the poem. Here a section appears called the *Schluraffen-Schiff*—(*Schluraffen* or *Schlauraffen* being a term signifying lazy apes or, as we should say, idle dogs)—while the wellknown fancy of the *Schlauraffenland* corresponds to that of our land of Cockayne—the land where fish swim about ready-boiled in the streams, where fried eggs grow on the trees and the hedges are brown with sausages done to a turn. Here the notion of the Ship or Ships of Fools, the crew of which sails in quest of a land of luxury and founders on the way, is in some measure kept up. But, in the general course of the poem, the author only returns now and then to the connecting fancy—for “plan” or “plot” it cannot be called—and in the main contents himself with describing and discussing the several varieties of fools, without any reference to their being accommodated in any ship or other sort of conveyance. It may be added that he reviews them without any attempt at order or sequence—haphazard, which, to be sure, is after the manner of fools. Now, medieval writers in general are addicted to this careless and inconsistent way of composition, which furnishes occasion for so much harmless labour to editors and commentators. But Brant (as if, like a true Puritan, he contemned that supreme grace of style which resides in the harmony and symmetry of a work as a whole) carries this disregard for form singularly far.

I should like to add that, in my opinion, sufficient attention has hardly been paid to the suggestion that there was a special reason why the author of *The Ship of Fools* jumbled up (if I may so say) in his mind the notion of fools in a ship and that of fools in a cart, to



such an extent that in one passage of the poem he speaks of both "ship and wagon heaving away from the shore." He was of course familiar with the shows so common in the Middle Ages, and called *pageants* in England (where the Lord Mayor's Show, a genuine type of the species, may be expected to survive more recent and more rational developments of it); indeed, he is, though on unsatisfactory evidence, said to have himself introduced the usage at Strassburg. At all events, whether or not the framework of the poem was in any degree due in its origin to a reminiscence of civic pageantry, there is certainly evidence that the device of a ship full of fools was not unknown to exhibitions of the kind after the publication of Brant's work.

But, after all, the chief reason of the popularity and fame achieved by that book must lie in the execution of its design, rather than in that design itself or in the name of the poem. And it is from this point of view that at the close of his poem, the author, at once proudly and slyly, avers that it is not every man who knows how to create fools—unless indeed his name be "the fool Sebastianus Brant." Yet, notwithstanding all that has been written on the subject, it is not very easy to state explicitly wherein lie the real merits of Brant's execution of his loosely conceived design.

Of course, there are, to begin with, the illustrations, to which reference has already been made more than once, and as to which it need only be added that at no time has wood-engraving held a *relatively* higher position than in that which produced these woodcuts, in part at least (for several hands are distinguished by expert eyes) of their kind hardly to be surpassed. Thus, the

types which in his list Brant brought successively forward (and generally in no large number of verses) were, so to speak, clothed with flesh and blood at the very outset, and seemed living figures even to the dulllest imagination, before the lessons to be enforced by them had come home to the experience and the conscience of his readers.

The excellence of the literary execution of the poem is far less striking. The style is dry (much drier in the original than in the English translation, which has something of the exuberance rarely absent from even the earliest productions of our Tudor literature); it even seems bald, though much less so on a closer than on a superficial acquaintance. In the period in which *The Ship of Fools* was produced, imaginative power was, of course, by no means deemed the first requisite for a poet, if indeed it was deemed a requisite for him at all. The first and indispensable mark of a real poet was learning—and this of two kinds, and virtually of two kinds only—viz. scriptural or classical. *The Ship of Fools* is conspicuous for both; indeed, when carefully analysed, it seems to contain comparatively little besides these two elements, of which that of Biblical references and allusions is by far the larger. But our author's learning is not only derived from the writers of the Bible (and more especially of the Old Testament) and from the authors of Latin antiquity (in Greek he was confessedly the merest beginner): it is, likewise, fed from sources to which he would perhaps not have so proudly acknowledged his obligations—the popular proverbs and sayings of his own native land; though Brant is one of those writers of whom it is not always easy to say whether he



is quoting proverbs or making them. And this at least, if just praise, is no slight tribute to his power of style.

Still, much as Brant learnt from books, he also learnt much from his observation of men. A wit he certainly was not; but he had in him something of that which goes to make up the humourist. He was an observer of manners, and (which is more) he was an observer of men—I mean of those human types which (without prejudice to the theory of the perfectibility of our race) seem not inappropriately to be called perennial. No doubt the class of society from which Brant took most of his types was, like that which he addressed, in the main the middle class of his times. This middle class was becoming wealthy, and becoming at the same time the real focus at once and starting-point of the activity, the enterprise, the ambition (so to speak) of the European world. In Germany, at all events, what there existed of intellectual effort, artistic or literary, was mainly (though not entirely) confined to this class; and, if its poetry was prose, that of the other classes was inarticulate, or had mouldered away into dust and ashes. The middle class was at the same time strong enough and healthy enough to be able to laugh, or bear a laugh, at itself; heavy, clumsy and coarse, it was inclined to be irresponsive when tickled with a straw, but, on being fairly tumbled down by a straightforward blow, it would rise up again and, perhaps, frankly acknowledge the force of the criticism.

Were any direct proof desiderated, to show that Brant's teaching came home very directly to those for whom it was more especially intended, such might be found in the best-known fact in the history of *The Ship*

of *Fools*. Some years before Sebastian Brant returned to Strassburg, one of the most distinguished associates of his University days at Basel had begun a career there unforgotten among the many noteworthy reminiscences of the German Renaissance: Geiler von Kaisersberg had become the most famous preacher of his age—"the trumpet of Strassburg" he was called. He was too great an orator not to be, in the truest sense of the word, a man of the people—not only one who, so far as he could, protected the people and pleaded its cause against oppression, opposing iniquitous taxes and intolerable forest-laws, and bearing himself as a friend to the poor, as a father to foundlings and as a comforter even to the condemned; but also a man who dared tell the truth to friend and foe alike. His sermons (which are extant) came home with the utmost directness to hearers of all classes, and all the more so because they spoke, to men and women, puissant and puny, rich and poor, not about the sins committed by some imaginary person at a comfortable distance from the church, but about the sins of which they were themselves guilty. To preachers of this kind any opportunity of furbishing up their armoury and freshening their effects must always be welcome, and Geiler hailed as a godsend, in the literal sense of the word, Brant's didactic poem. He took its successive sections for his texts in a long series of sermons, which he arranged under the headings of so many *swarms* or divisions of fools, and so many *bells* or subdivisions in each swarm. The sermons, as preserved to us, seem (so far as I have noticed) more remarkable for their plainness and directness than for any other quality—but who would care to criticise the



bones of dead discourses? No better testimony than the fact of these sermons could assuredly be furnished to the palpable truthfulness of *The Ship of Fools*.

If, in conclusion, I direct special attention to one or two among the passengers in the Ship, it is not because I think this is a case for careful selection; and, if I speak of the first in the list to begin with, it is not because I think the insinuation either fair or well-founded that the didactic poet's first lesson should be regarded as a sort of voluntary self-immolation. Unlike many satirists who came after him, Brant had not a grain of self-irony in his nature, nor a trace of a suspicion that he might be astray in any of his ideas concerning wisdom and folly. The first fool whom he introduces to his readers is certainly not the worst fool; and one who, I will venture to say, had not revealed the whole of his dangerous qualities in the 15th century. The lover of *inprofytable bokes* (in Brant's woodcut he appears in night- as well as fool's cap, wearing the spectacles which already in those days were supposed to be evidence of fanatical study<sup>1</sup>) is, however, properly speaking, neither the infatuated scholar, nor even the petty pedant, but the impostor who, because he displays the visible signs of learning in a handsome library full of well-bound volumes, thinks himself on that score entitled to respect and reverence. It is not a little to Brant's credit that he should have recognised a foible of the Renaissance age in a feature which in its early days can only have been beginning to thrust itself

<sup>1</sup> And so, in the Elizabethan age. "I'll break his glass-windows about his ears," says a boorish visitor of Doctor Faustus in Marlowe's tragedy.

forward. It should, however, not be forgotten that in the days of the epical poet Maximilian, as in those of the theologically inclined Henry VIII, learning was in fashion as well as in good repute, and was doubtless affected by many because it was patronised at Court and was supposed to imply good breeding, though they were innocent of it in their hearts:

But if it fortune that any lerned men  
Within my house fall to disputacion,  
I drawe the curtyns to shewe my bokes then,  
That theye of my cunnyng sholde make probacion,  
I kepe not to fall in altercacion,  
And whyle they comón, my bokes I turne and wynde;  
For all is in them, and no thyng in my mynde.

In a later section of *The Ship of Fools*, the author goes a step beyond these cavils against the unprofitableness of the outside of books, in order to speak of the unprofitableness of the inside of some of them. The satire of this latter passage does not go very deep; but it proves that even one nurtured in Scholasticism and its ways like Brant could have a shrewd idea of their barrenness, and compare to the swarm of flies which corrupted the land of Egypt the buzzing dialectics which filled the lecture-rooms of Leipzig and Erfurt and Vienna and Heidelberg and Mainz, and even of his own beloved Basel.

As to the remaining sections of *The Ship of Fools*, it would not be very difficult, even without the aid of the woodcuts, to attempt to produce out of the materials in Brant's book something like a picture of German middle-class life at the close of the Middle Ages—indeed, I do not know why I should say *German*: for



by means of a few fresh touches Barklay easily adapts the picture to English conditions. Thus, for example, in the instance of the moralist's invective against extravagance in dress—a subject in so far of greater importance in the 15th century than in the 20th, that it almost equally concerned both sexes. The great Strassburg preacher accordingly addresses himself to the extravagances, absurdities and enormities of male as well as female attire, when he takes up his parable on this part of Brant's text and goes accurately through the various vagaries of the Peculiar Fools, the Got-up Fools, the Affected Fools, the Painted Fools and the Looking-Glass Fools. We are in the age, remember, of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, or the age of what Shakespeare calls "fierce vanities"; and his glittering picture of the French "all clinquant, all in gold" and their English rivals is quite in harmony with that of the "yonge Jentylnen descended of worthy auncestry" who figure in *The Ship of Fools*, their necks charged with collars, and chains as thick as golden withes, their fingers full of rings, their necks bare and their sleeves like the wings of a crane<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> By the way, flattery has never been more outrageous than in the *envoi* which Barklay has quite gratuitously added to this diatribe on dress, and in which he appeals, as to an instance of sadness, i.e., sobriety in apparel, to the example of Henry VIII, who might have blushed as purple as his slashed velvet to hear himself thus referred to:

But ye proude Galannides that thus yourselfe disguise,  
 Be ye asshamed; beholde vnto your Prynce;  
 Consyder his sadnes; his honestye denyse:  
 His clothynge expresseth his inwarde prudence,  
 Ye se no Example of such Inconuenience  
 In his hyghness, but godly wyt and grauyté.  
 Ensue him, and sorowe for your enormyté.

Of course, the ladies have their full share of the reproof; and their fashions of apparel are most rigorously criticised, from the peaked hats "set aloft" on their heads to the long trains dragging behind them in the dust—the latter an outrageous practice which, says the Strassburg preacher, the priests and prelates in France and Italia have driven to a still further pitch of pride, who have servants specially appointed to carry the tips of their trains behind them. But as for the ladies, why should we speak of *ladies*, when Brant bears witness that citizens' wives walk about in more gorgeous attire than countesses, and that even the helpmates of poor workingmen carry about them on their persons in the way of gowns, rings, cloaks and fringes, more property than they have left in the four walls of their husbands' houses.

Fond of gay and gorgeous apparel, the age was at least equally addicted to the pleasures of the table. An insatiable love of feasting was a most unmistakable feature of the times, and a quenchless love of drink was common to the whole Teutonic race. Nowhere was there more self-indulgence in these habits than among the light-hearted denizens of the vine-clad banks of the Upper Rhine. (It is noteworthy that Brant only points out, as a sort of postscript or afterthought, that what he has said applies to beer-drinkers as well as wine-bibbers; beer was a Low-German, not a High-German, beverage; the Scotchman Barklay impartially brackets wine and ale together.) For the rest, temperance, not total abstinence, was the Strassburg poet's platform. "A fool," he says, if I may freely translate him,



in large draughts takes pleasure;  
A wise man knows to drink with measure,  
And is far healthier than the dunce  
Who pours whole tubfuls in at once.

The inordinate love of eating and drinking which prevailed in the Middle Ages, and more especially among the German and cognate peoples, contributed enormously to retard the progress of refinement, though other reasons may have helped to promote the worship of Saint Grobian, whom Brant mentions as the patron saint of the unpolite. Our author was sagacious enough to know that manners are an excellent, if not infallible, test of high qualities of both mind and heart. Hence, no fool is—in the literal sense of the epithet—a more egregious fool than he who has not learnt, or who has refused to learn, how to behave himself. *The Ship of Fools* contains an unusually long section concerning those fools who do not know how to behave themselves at table; and, though habits have in some respects changed since his time, and are not in this matter in particular as yet settled on a complete international basis, still there are many points of agreement, especially negative points, between good manners of this day and of that—though it need no longer be a moot point whether in helping yourself to salt it is not better to take a pinch with clean fingers (Brant most strongly insists on the rite of washing hands before dinner) than to plunge your knife into the salt-cellar. Propriety, then, should be observed in dining; in *dancing* our Puritan moralist sees no propriety at all. It was invented in a season when the people of Israel sinned against their God, nor is it the more excusable as an amusement

because, on festive occasions, the clergy so largely take part in it. More manifestly foolish is the practice of serenading, a custom which seems irresistibly to associate itself with the narrow streets and high, many-storeyed, many-balconied houses of medieval towns. But Brant has no patience with it; for truly small must be the pleasure

In winter nights your heels to cool,  
A fool—and courting of a fool.

A kind of climax in this class of fools is in Brant's opinion the case of the Shrove Tuesday or Carnival Fool; and on the whole there seems some point in his declaration that neither Jew nor Pagan ever degraded his religion by so shameful a funeral-solemnity as that in which the Christian world once a year, at Carnival time, takes so inane a joy. And to make a mock of the pious usages of Ash Wednesday, by throwing ashes and mud over one's fellow-Christians—especially female fellow-Christians—as they pass by in the street, seems certainly to be the fool's gloss on the Liturgy of the Church.

To these examples from *The Ship of Fools* of manners, or of the want of them, in the 15th century might of course be added many others of social uses or abuses bequeathed by it to its successors. If Astrology is a dead science, there is no truth more fatal to the kindred delusions which have survived it than that which underlies Brant's saying that God (or Nature) is not to be *forced*. To be sure, our author at times shows himself the timorous child of an age which shrinks from tasks which mankind is called upon to face. Alchemy, astrology and the like may seem pursuits which re-



semble playing with fire; but what is to be said of the opinion that there is something foolish—i.e. sinful—in the inordinate love of—geography? We should, however, remember that the discovery of the New World was just then bursting upon an awestruck and uncritical generation, before we decide that there is not a grain of truth in the stanzas, in which Barklay reproduces at all events the thought of Brant's section "Of exploring all lands."

And, even if the imaginative intelligence of our author be occasionally at fault, he is always on the side of veracity and candour; just as, if his moral indignation be occasionally misplaced, its incidence is fearless and refuses compromise with any form of vice or frailty. Gamblers are not castigated with greater severity than usurers, or idle wives than calculating husbands. Even the clergy are, with a quiet seriousness uncoloured by the malice or prejudice which barbs so much of the medieval satire directed against their Order, subjected to frequent warning and reproof, only too well warranted by the failings or malpractices noticeable among its members. Brant's counsel to the clergy is both loyal and wholesome; nor is there any point on which he more earnestly dwells than the necessity of due thought and preparation before the solemn responsibility of Holy Orders is assumed. (In Barklay's hands this passage, I need hardly say, loses nothing of its severity.) But neither are the vices of the laity slurred over, how elevated so ever the spheres in which those vices are most largely practised. The immorality of field sports (a real immorality as carried on by the squiredom of Germany, where not long afterwards the Wild Huntsman became

the type of the unrest of perdition) is treated with as little reserve as is the effrontery of the vagabond class which enjoys itself consummately on the charity of its superiors. I wish I had left myself room for entering into Brant's description of a kind of Beggar's Bush near Basel, where the outcasts of society had made a society with rules and usages of its own for themselves. The Beggars, as M. Jusserand has taught us, played a great part in the life of the Middle Ages; indeed, being the real circulating medium in the world at a time when circulation was difficult, they were the unpaid agitators in many a political and religious movement—their share in which has not been appreciated by history. The irresponsibility of the vagrant added to his journalistic freedom of utterance, while the conservative powers in society frowned upon the newsmongering tendency of the times—Brant is very emphatic in the contempt which he expresses for the prevalent love of news and for the excessive facilities offered for its transmission (whether true or false) by the postal authorities.

But it would be altogether misleading to bid farewell to our moralist with a notion of him as a mere painter or even a mere satirist of manners. The author of *The Ship of Fools* was moved by far deeper thoughts and purposes. If he believed the world out of gear, and Anti-Christ—not Wiclif's or Luther's Anti-Christ, I need hardly say—at hand, it was because the folly against which he raised his voice seemed to him more than the passing folly of fashion or extravagance, or of idle or vain habit of this kind or of that. Never, he declares, have there been in the world means of knowledge so numerous; all the books ever made by our



ancestors are now accessible to us all; never before were there so many schools, so many Universities, and so many frequenters of them. But faith is decayed, the Scripture which lies open before us is despised, and the God who is thus abundantly manifested to us is the scorn of the fools who crowd our ship:

What menest thou by god the Father eternall?  
 Howe takest thou hym, howe countest thou his lawe,  
 Whiche by thy presumpcion foule and infernall  
 Dare be so bolde his berde this wyse to drawe?  
 By his hye myght thou countest nat a strawe;  
 And than, whan god by mercy and pyté  
 A whyle the suffreth for thy dede to go fre,

And doth nat punysshé this synne incontynent,  
 Therfore thou thynkest that god hath pardoned the;  
 Bycause the lyghtnyng or thounder vyolent  
 And other tempestuous stormes whan they be  
 Ouerturneth downe an oke or other tre,  
 And suffreth the and thy hows to be vnbrent,  
 Thus thýnkest thou: the pardonyd by god omnyotent.

This is the folly of follies, the supreme folly which Brant and his associates had set themselves to scotch if not to kill. The very learning, which they all professed and promoted, they held as nothing in comparison with the Source of its inspiration; all other follies seemed venial in comparison with that which rejoiced in making a mock at Providence:

Persist, by all divine in man unaw'd;  
 But 'Learn, ye Dunces, not to scorn your God.'

If something like this was the essential spirit of Brant's work, so in his *Apology* at its close he explicitly declares the honour of God and the benefit of mankind

to have been the purposes with which he composed it. Maybe, he says, its fate may resemble that of a flower which has a pleasant scent and from which a bee sucks honey—not one from which a spider, when he comes to weave his web across it, will only draw poison after his kind. For ourselves, it may perhaps suffice if a perusal of this famous book directs our attention to one of the most sober and most serious—I might almost say, one of the most solemn—aspects of the great historical movement of the Renaissance. Brant's plain-spoken allegory sought to remind the German nation, and with it those other kindred peoples who claimed to be part of the author's public, that the world was too weak to pursue its course by itself, and that its new wisdom would be like unto its old folly, if compass and anchor were lacking in the equipment for the voyage. This was the lesson which *The Ship of Fools* endeavoured to impress upon its generation—a lesson, like all other human lessons imperfectly taught and imperfectly learnt, but neither given ignobly nor received altogether in vain.

## 2. THE BRETHREN OF DEVENTER

(*The Cornhill Magazine*, August 1882.)

ROUND- and red-cheeked little boys and girls were chanting their vowel-sounds in the school-house on St Agnes' Mount, near Zwolle, when we made our pilgrimage to the resting-place of Thomas a Kempis, the historian of the Deventer Brotherhood, of whose piety he was himself the choicest flower. At Deventer, we found the inevitable Calvinistic whitewash, relieved only by one or two irrepressible fragments of fresco, effacing the noble lines of St Lebuin's, the vast church in which Thomas a Kempis' spiritual father, the venerable Florentius, was wont to pour forth his simple eloquence. And of Gerard Groot himself, the original founder of the fraternity which has made the name of the busy Overijssel town illustrious, the memory might have seemed altogether to have fled its streets and places, but for a whole suburb of benevolent foundations, spreading themselves out with more than ordinary Dutch amplitude, and garnished everywhere with those bright bits of flower-garden which in the Netherlands no Béguinage is too ancient, and no pensioner is too poor, to maintain.

And yet not only the stillness which has laid itself like the veil of evening upon the remote graveyard, but the busy activity, too, which continues its week-day hum round church and almshouses, harmonises with the reminiscences of which these localities are full. There are more ways than one, as a mystic visionary of the



12th century tells us, leading heavenward; but both the hyacinthine path of contemplation and the green path of active life were trodden by the men to whom Deventer and the foundations branching out from it were at once places of retreat and scenes of active labour. To the influence which the movement begun in these regions exercised upon the course of the Renaissance in the 15th century, Germanic Europe owed something besides traditions of self-denying beneficence and examples of unworldly piety. On the one hand, it is certain that the Deventer Brotherhood, or one or more of the institutions of which it was the parent, gave their moral and intellectual nurture to men who may without any misuse of a much misused term be reckoned among the precursors of the Lutheran Reformation. And, on the other, it was here that were also educated some of the most illustrious representatives of that great, and in its failure most pathetic, movement of the Renaissance age, the endeavour to reform the Church from within. Among the precursors of Luther may, in all probability, be reckoned John Pupper, called John of Goch, and, without any doubt whatever, the famous *magister contradictionum*, John Wessel. John of Goch, although during his lifetime he gave no offence to the authorities of the existing Church, was in truth radically, if unconsciously, opposed to her system and its fruits; so that, in due time, his works were prohibited by the Council of Trent, after nearly a century had passed since their author had peacefully died in the house of the good Sisters at Tabor, outside the walls of monkish Mecheln. John Wessel, some of whose earlier as well as later days were spent with the Clericals of the

Common Life at Zwolle, was of a more high-mettled nature, and, in his own apprehension at least, very nearly became a martyr to opinions which Luther afterwards declared substantially identical with his own. Wessel, however, was saved by powerful protection from the flames to which he refers, either in a literal or in a metaphorical sense; and he died at peace in his native town of Gröningen, after overcoming deep religious doubts almost at the very last. Better known to general fame are two pupils of Deventer on whose orthodoxy no breath of suspicion has ever rested. The earlier of these, who was likewise a munificent benefactor of the institution to which he owed his youthful training, as well as an active promoter of the spread of its system, was Cardinal Cusanus (of Cues on the Moselle). The author of the *De concordantiâ catholicâ* was not more surely identified with the reactionary policy which strove to reduce or undo the effects of the concessions made by the Papacy at the Council at Basel, than with the endeavour to revive and spiritualise the life of the Church whose constitution that Council had sought to resettle. Cardinal Cusanus' visitation of Germany was an arduous and long-sustained endeavour to purify and reinvigorate one great national branch of the Christian Church; and, when he afterwards proposed to his friend Pope Pius II (*Æneas Sylvius*), a visitation and reform of the College of Cardinals itself, it was clear that his projects addressed themselves to the root as well as to the branches. An even more widely remembered son of Deventer is that truly venerable figure among the Roman Pontiffs, whose name has derived no less lustre from his failure than

the names of many of his predecessors have from their success. It is true that, as a teacher and a man of learning, Pope Adrian VI is to be reckoned among the adherents of Scholasticism rather than among the Humanists; indeed, he was "wont to despise the flowers of the more elaborate kind of eloquence and the amenities of the poets." But he had learnt other lessons besides those of the Schoolmen, though unfortunately the art of government had not been included among them; and when, amidst the execrations of corrupt Rome, he had taken his seat in the chair of St Peter, the "old pedant" offered to the Church over which he presided an example of moral courage surpassed by no other in her history. And yet, neither in the conscientiousness of John Wessel as a religious thinker, nor in that of Pope Adrian VI as a religious Reformer, is the full spirit of the Brotherhood, its peculiar genius (if I may so express myself), most strikingly apparent. Its most characteristic product is after all to be sought in the life and labours of the master-scholar of the Germanic Renaissance. Zealots, who hold that a law is binding upon honest men in all quarrels, whether political or ecclesiastical, to choose one of two sides, will doubtless continue to impugn the consistency and singlemindedness of Erasmus; but those who believe him to have been distinguished by these qualities, will also incline to think that he was animated and steadied for the efforts of his maturity by the training of his youth. It cannot be denied that he lived to attack with contemptuous ire the Brethren's schools, in one of which he had himself received his early education; but his invective refers only to the period of their stagnation and decline. And



it is worth noting, by the way, as an illustration of the looseness of treatment which has too often been the fate of Erasmus, that one of the best-known accounts of the Brotherhoods makes him complain "of having himself wasted two years in one of their institutions," whereas (as I will show a little further on), it is not of himself that he is speaking at all in the passage cited.

It need hardly be said that the name of Erasmus is far from being the only one illustrious in the history of learning and letters which connects the annals of the Deventer and Zwolle Fraternities with the general course of the Renaissance movement. The story, to be sure, according to which Thomas a Kempis sent three of his pupils from Deventer to Italy, and thus directly prepared the revival of classical studies in the Low Countries and the neighbouring parts of the Empire, will not bear examination; but it is, all the same, incontestable that the Brethren's schools were of the utmost assistance in fostering that exact study of the classical languages which was to receive a more vigorous impulse, when Agricola and other pioneers of Humanism returned from Italy, intent upon raising the literary fame of their "barbarous" native land. From the teaching at Deventer of Alexander Hegius more especially (though he did not stand alone), there issued forth not only a long line of more or less celebrated scholars, but also some who were themselves in their turn to become centres of academical or literary influence. Such—not to speak again of Erasmus himself—was Conrad Mutianus, the wise and refined Canon of Gotha, and the glory, in its happier days, of the neighbouring University of Erfurt, then (in the earlier

years of the 16th century) the foremost of the Universities in the Empire that favoured the New Learning. Besides him, there came from Deventer at least one of the many who have been credited with a share in the authorship of the famous Dunciad of the Scholastics, the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*. This was the celebrated Hermann von dem Busche, who is aptly described by Strauss as "the missionary of Humanism," and who suffered, as well as bestowed, many a buffet for the good cause. Not less certain is the connexion, as a pupil of Hegius, with Deventer of an unlucky scholar whose doom it has been to be remembered by an amused posterity as one of the most prominent *victims* of the same immortal satire. And yet this, at least, may be said on behalf of Magister Ortuinus Gratus (Ortuin de Graes): first, that he seems to have been quite as heartily devoted to learning as were most of his opponents; and, again, that his later conduct shows him to have been gifted with an instinct denied to many far more excellent scholars—the instinct of knowing when he had put himself in the wrong. Two other names only shall here be mentioned as illustrating the widespread and many-sided influence of the Deventrian training, because they form a most important link between this early or introductory chapter in the history of the German Renaissance, and its subsequent growth. At Deventer was taught, some time in the second quarter of the 15th century, the Westphalian Ludwig Dringenberg, whose own school at Schlettstadt became a main lever of the Renaissance movement in Elsass, and through the efforts of the famous Wimpheling and others, the means of opening a new era in the educational

history of Germany. Not the least interesting feature in his system of teaching is its popular element, which recalls the circumstances of his schooling: he made his pupils learn German rimes about the national history, which was an advance upon the Latin rimes in the Scholastic grammars about verbs and substantives. Another Westphalian educated at Deventer, was Rudolph von Langen, who brought from Italy the accomplishment of Latin verse composition, or "poetry," as it was then called, and, having become a member of the Cathedral body at Münster, raised the schools of Westphalia, and its intellectual life in general, to an unprecedented stage of activity. The influence of seminaries founded in adjoining parts of Germany by Deventrians or their disciples must have operated in the same direction. And thus, while the Universities in the main continued for a long time to cherish and defend the Scholastic method of instruction, its overthrow was already in course of accomplishment by means of the unpretending schools which were the creations of the simple piety of a few humble men.

Such are a few of the more prominent instances of the influence exercised by these institutions. If, after all, what is most deeply interesting in their history seems to shrink away from the touch of enquiry, this is only too easily accounted for. In the lives of institutions, as in those of individual men and women, it is the period of aspiration which has the greatest charm; but how difficult, at times how impossible, it is for the observer to catch and reproduce this bloom of youth!

The foundation of the earliest Brotherhood of the Common Life can hardly be dated before the last quarter



of the 14th century; but, like all institutions which have satisfied a real need in the life of their age, this was not a sudden growth, still less the invention of a single mind. The Netherlands, which at this time had not yet reached the full height of their prosperity, were more and more shaking off the predominance of their nobility; while at no stage of their history has the part played by the clergy in the life of the people been of less significance. These wellknown circumstances—which here as elsewhere betokened the approach of new times with new ideas both political and religious—explain two curious facts bearing on the present subject. In the first place, a considerable number of schools had been founded in the Dutch towns during the course of the 14th century; but these schools were commercial speculations rather than endowed seminaries of piety and learning. Again, the popular religious movements that had up to this time occurred in the Netherlands had, on the whole, shown but little connexion with the established organisation of the Church. The country was, as is well known, during the whole of the Middle Ages, a favourite home of those tendencies of religious thought and feeling which are commonly classed together under the rather vague name of *Mysticism*; and equally familiar to the soil of these regions, and with similar persistency long-lived, were those associations at which the Church looked askance, until at last she accorded them more or less qualified sanction. By the side of the *Béguines* and *Beghards* and *Lollards*—the true ancestors, from one point of view, of the *Brethren of the Common Life*—there had sprung up other associations, with more or less doubtful and dangerous tenets

and usages; and it was inevitable that (just as in England in Wiclif's later days) an indolent public should confound the sowers of corn with the scatterers of cockle. Moreover, owing to the slightness of the attention as yet paid by the people at large to clerical theology, no signs had yet appeared of any recalcitrance against any part of the Roman system of dogma. Notwithstanding the lively commercial intercourse between England and Flanders, the teachings of Wiclif failed to penetrate among the burghers of the Flemish and Dutch towns—whom, for that matter, those of Hus likewise failed to reach in the next generation.

Blind to her opportunities as well as to her dangers, the Church had allowed these longings and gaspings after a truer and fuller religious life to lose themselves in extravagance and ecstasism, though we may rest assured that a purer flame had continued to burn in many a remote cell and humble home unremembered in history. For us, however, Mysticism, as it appears in the Netherlands, finds its first articulate expression in John Ruysbroeck, the venerable Prior of Groenendal, near Brussels. Ruysbroeck was, long after his death, denounced as heretical by the great Gerson; but his fame in life was that of a chosen depositary of the counsels and consolations of Divine wisdom and love. He had consecrated himself to God—and had to others seemed so consecrated—even before he had taken Holy Orders. When, as a young man, he was on one occasion walking through the streets of Brussels, two "men of the world" passed him on his way. "Would that I," exclaimed one of these, struck by his appearance, "had a sanctity of life such as this priest's!" "Not for all

the gold in the world," the other "riotour" (as Chaucer would have called him) made answer, "for in that case I should never again know what it is to have a good time." "Alas, poor man," thought Ruysbroeck to himself, "how little thou knowest the sweetness which those feel within them who taste the Spirit of God." Here we have the very essence of the mystic conception of religious life; but neither do we miss in Ruysbroeck the practical simplicity which was to be inherited from him by the disciples of his teaching. Thus he was anxious to expose the impostures of pretended ecstasies, and was specially successful in making clear the real nature of the "freedom of the spirit and seraphic love," inculcated by a too popular Sister at Brussels. Ruysbroeck cannot in any sense be called a Reformer, and the question as to the measure of originality traceable in his religious conceptions must be passed over here. But the significance of his personality and teachings for that chapter of religious history with which we are more particularly concerned, is that they pointed the way hereupon actually taken by the man who made Mysticism a practical and popular influence, and who thus became the author of a movement destined to make itself felt throughout his native land, and far beyond its boundaries.

As the 14th century began to draw towards its close, the Christian world might feel that it had for some time had enough of lamentations about the state of this world, however eloquent, sincere, and well-founded. But grievances, as we know, are a plant slowly ripening towards redress. There is a vast difference between the *Miserere's* of *The Vision of Piers Plowman*



and the polemical protests of Wiclif; and the step is considerable even from the complaints of Ruysbroeck to the remedial action begun by Gerard Groot. The personal history of the latter, so far as it lies open to us, is that of numberless agents of enthusiasm, from Ignatius Loyola down to many an evangelical light of these latter days. He was the son of well-born and wealthy parents; and the fact that his father, who was burgomaster of Deventer, intended him for the Church, enabling him to prepare himself for Orders by an early academical course at Paris, may have been due to the weakly health of the boy. After continuing his studies, and at the same time beginning his efforts as a teacher, at Cologne, he seemed likely, some agreeable preferments having fallen to his lot, to become what Chaucer might have called an "idle chanon." If there is one thing more pathetic than the religious aspirations of this age, it is its scientific gropings; and Gerard Groot, like so many medieval students and enquirers, was reputed an adept in astrology and necromancy, albeit he eagerly protested that he had never studied to his own damnation. But, though the habits of reading and writing seem afterwards to have clung to him, as it were, in spite of himself, there can be no doubt that at the critical point of his career he was seized by a strong revulsion against the special temptations incident to his mode of life. He resigned his two canonries; he denounced the hollow delusion of university degrees; and he proscribed the twin vanities of disputations and literary authorship. Most fortunately, his genuine love of books, and his charitable goodwill towards learners, prevented him to the last from carrying his Puritanic

principles to their logical consequences; and his library survived him as a cherished inheritance of his famous foundation.

Thus Gerard Groot passed through that great change in the conception of the task and duties of human life which perhaps more men undergo than care to call it by a technical term of religious import. The peculiarity—though of course no unique peculiarity—of his conduct was that he at once and completely translated his convictions into action. He not only, as has been said, gave up his preferments and burnt his vain “mathematical” books; but he also renounced whatever property belonging to him was not either absolutely necessary for his sustenance, or capable of being devoted to pious purposes. After a three years’ period of preparation in a monastic retreat, he took Deacon’s Orders, and began his labours as a missionary preacher under the licence of the Bishop of Utrecht. As is so often the case with men whose careers have resembled his, humility was in him coupled with a strange self-confidence. “Not for a hatfull of golden guilders,” so he told the parson of Zwolle, “would he be himself parson of Zwolle even for the space of a single night”; yet he preached without fear or faltering before rich and poor, learned and lewd, through the length and breadth of the Northern Provinces, most frequently, it would seem, at St Mary’s in Deventer itself. Nor was his courage fair-weather courage only, or his humility of the unbending kind not unusual in popular preachers. For, when at last (as it would seem, not without the cooperation of the jealousy of the Mendicant Friars) an episcopal prohibition arrested his preaching, he first straightforwardly de-

precated the justice, and then unreservedly acknowledged and obeyed the authority, of the ordinance.

But the institutions founded by Groot during the period of his activity as a preacher were not to come to an end with it. He was, and is, rightly venerated as their Founder, although in his lifetime they never passed beyond an initial stage. There seems to be some uncertainty as to questions of dates and priority; but it may be concluded that the earliest foundation presenting the distinctive features of a Brotherhood of the Common Life was established by Groot at Deventer itself, before a similar institution was opened at Zwolle. The inspiring example of the holy tranquillity of the life led by Ruysbroeck and his brother Canons at Groenendal had suggested to Groot to aim at a similar result in Deventer. But he was still a comparatively young man, indisposed for a mere withdrawal into the cloister, fully awake to the shortcomings and failings of the existing Monastic Orders, and prevented by the jealous arm of authority from the performance of pastoral duties. Silenced as a preacher, he began to attach to himself personally young men and lads in his native town, and more especially scholars in its Latin school, whom he induced to copy the Scriptures and certain of the Fathers for him, and, while remunerating them for their work, thus brought under the influence of his conversation and counsel. After this fashion he, from the very first, connected the pursuit of learning with religious thoughts and ways. Verysoon, an ardent disciple of Groot, afterwards his successor in the direction of the Brotherhoods, Florentius, the son of Radevyn (Floris Radevynszoon), suggested that he and the copyists should club their weekly



earnings into a common fund, and from its proceeds lead *a common life*. After some hesitation (owing to fear of the jealousy of the Mendicant Orders), Groot accorded his sanction, and the plan was carried into execution, in the first instance in the house of Florentius himself. Thus from the outset the characteristic mark of the association, the rule, so to speak, distinguishing it from the Mendicant bodies, was that it supported itself, so far as possible, not by alms but by labour. Groot lived to see another Brotherhood established at Zwolle, while he gave up his own paternal house at Deventer to a Sisterhood established there on somewhat similar principles, and superintended by himself. But his wish (which proves how far he was from assuming a hostile attitude towards the Monastic system in general) to found a society of Regular Canons in connexion with his Brotherhoods, and forming as it were their natural apex, was only accomplished by his successor. In 1384, he caught the plague from a friend whom he was nursing at Deventer, and died shortly afterwards, on the feast of St Bernard. "St Augustine and St Bernard," he had told his distressed friends, "are knocking at the gate."

His work was carried on by the real organiser as well as originator of the Brotherhoods, Florentius, the son of a prosperous citizen of Leerdam, in South Holland. To him Thomas a Kempis does no more than justice when he proposes, "after presenting in Master Gerard the good fruitful tree from whom our pious life took its beginning, to bring before you in his disciple, the pious Florentius, a glorious sweet-smelling blossom of that tree." Florentius, like Gerard, lived to no ad-

vanced age; but, during the sixteen years for which he survived his revered master, their joint creation had grown in an extraordinary degree. He was, more emphatically than Gerard Groot, a man of action rather than of books; he proclaimed his abhorrence of dead Scholastic knowledge ("the Devil," he points out, "knows a great deal of the Scriptures, and yet it avails him nothing"); and he was himself so little of an expert in the art of writing that he contributed his own share of productive labour as a binder, rather than as a transcriber, of manuscripts. On the other hand, his eloquence in the pulpit can in no way have fallen short of his master's, in enthusiastic sympathy with whom Florentius had begun by exchanging a comfortable canonry at Utrecht for the laborious post of Vicar at St Lebuin's, in Deventer. Thus he was marked out for his task. Under his rule, not only was the Deventer Brotherhood enlarged and rehoused, but at Zwolle too, where the famous schoolmaster Cele, an old associate of Groot's, gathered many hundreds of pupils around him, a second House was opened, and in other towns also the same species of institution began gradually to spring up. Meanwhile, Florentius had further succeeded in carrying out his friend's cherished wish of establishing a monastic foundation of Regular Canons; indeed, before his death he had established two, the first at Windesem, near Zwolle, the second in the more immediate vicinity of that town, on the hill of St Agnes.

With the death of Florentius the first period in the history of the Brotherhoods may be said to close; or, in other words, by that time the period of a steady and continuous growth had fairly set in. It is of the earlier

time that so touching a series of reminiscences have been preserved by Thomas a Kempis (whose fees as a scholar at Deventer the good Florentius generously offered to defray; but the schoolmaster, hearing who intended to pay them, would not accept them when Thomas came with them to redeem the book he had—in accordance with a common custom—left in pledge). Thus we are enabled to realise to ourselves the figures of the chief among the Brethren who surrounded their beloved head, and followed the “praiseworthy usages” devised by him, until these gradually fixed themselves as the statutes of the community. At first there had been only one ordained ecclesiastic among them besides the Founder; but, gradually, others of the Brethren, after undergoing a conscientious preparation, took Orders. Several of these were men of good birth and fortune; but any such distinctions were merged in the humility and self-sacrifice of all. Not only property was common, but labour; for the Brethren shared among one another a variety of industrial and menial tasks and occupations, without thinking any burdensome or contemptible. Still, some functions were permanently assigned to particular Brethren, and perhaps the most typical representatives of the moral and intellectual significance of the association were the two brethren who served it respectively in the capacities of cook and of librarian. John Kakabus the cook, commonly called “Ketel,” in playful allusion to his functions, had formerly been a merchant at Dort, till an irresistible impulse had caused him to become, first a scholar at Deventer, and then a member of the Brotherhood. It was his own prayer that he might serve the Brethren’s House in the



humble office which he was appointed to fill; and though he had not contrived to muster enough learning to understand the Latin read aloud at meals, he performed his menial labours in no menial spirit. While his hands were busy over his pots, his voice went up in psalms of praise; and thus his kitchen (where the Brethren, including Florentius himself, had week by week to take their turn as helpers) resembled a chamber of prayer. He never wearied of doing good to the poor; for he had utterly cast off regard for the things of this world. "We read," he said, "in the Gospel, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit'; but nowhere do we read, 'Blessed are the Masters of Arts.'" Still more interesting, because exemplifying that union between love of knowledge and active piety which lies at the root of the system of the Deventer Brotherhood, is the character, as handed down to us, of its librarian, Gerard Zerbold of Zutphen. He was a born student, seemingly absorbed in his books, indifferent to the advantages of air and exercise, and absolutely indifferent to his dinner. But he was, in truth, very far from being a mere bookworm. A true friend of knowledge, he not only contrived to augment the collection of books bequeathed to the Brotherhood by its founder, but provided for their use even by readers at a distance. Nor was his own learning of the useless sort. Well seen in the law, he became the trusted man of business of the fraternity, as well as its literary champion. He successfully defended it against the monkish insinuation that it was an "unlawful conventicle"; and he sustained in excellent Latin the thesis—for the truth of which he adduced fifteen reasons—that it is profitable to read Holy Scripture in the vulgar tongue.

Such as these were the associates who dwelt with Florentius in the House called after his name at Deventer. It continued from first to last (so far as appears) to be acknowledged as the parent and central institution of the whole system of Brotherhoods, and its head or Rector held an honorary primacy among the Rectors or Priors of the several Houses, who seem, in later times at all events, to have periodically met for purposes of conference. Nor is there any reason to doubt that the younger Brethren's Houses, in the main, followed the example of the Florentius House in their constitution and ways of life. It was usual for a Brethren's House to be inhabited by at least four priests, and about twice as many Clerks (*clerici*), the score or so of persons included in the establishment being completed by "Laymen" and "Novices." The Clerks were the ordinary Brethren, corresponding to monks in a convent; but, unlike these, bound to no vows, and at liberty to depart after contributing a certain sum of money. The Laymen were those who, by their own desire, shared for a time in the common life. As for the Novices, it need only be said that it was against the principles of the Brotherhood to court or solicit additions to their numbers (though, if Erasmus is to be trusted, in this respect, also, things were afterwards to change). Among the members of the communities as little of formality as possible seems to have been required. There were no officers except the Rector and his substitute, and functionaries charged with the performance of certain necessary duties; while in the matter of dress, nothing but an "excessive simplicity" of grey coat, overcoat, and cowl seems to have distinguished the Brethren from other wearers of

frieze. But their main distinction, after all, lay rather in their occupations than in the forms of their life. Sensible as they necessarily were to the uses of preaching and prayer, yet they had not renounced an active life in abandoning a worldly one. "So long," says the author of the *Imitatio*, "as thou art in the flesh, thou oughtest oftentimes to bewail the burden of the flesh; for thou canst not without intermission engage in spiritual exercises and divine contemplation. At these times, it is expedient for thee to betake thyself to lowly works in the outer world, and to recreate thyself in good actions." It has been seen how Thomas a Kempis devoted a separate biographical sketch to the merits of a Brother *qui coquus fuit*; and at St Agnes' he cheerfully undertook himself the almost equally "mechanical" duties of a steward. Frequently the Brethren practised handicrafts; and indeed, as was perhaps inevitable, in some fraternities, the industrial spirit gained the mastery to such an extent as to convert them into something not very unlike cooperative societies. But the chief and favourite pursuits, of course, continued to be those of education and literature; for it was not forgotten that the origin of the Brotherhoods had been an endeavour to furnish young scholars with the means for carrying on their studies, by encouraging and promoting on their part the *transcription of books*.

As was natural enough among simple men at a time when book-learning partook not a little of the nature of a luxury, there was among the Brethren considerable searching of heart as to the righteousness of the spread of books in general. Fortunately, the good founder, though objecting in principle to most of the *trivium*



and *quadrivium* as sheer waste of time, had also been a genuine lover of books, of which he could not help avowing himself "avaricious, nay, over-avaricious." Not less fortunately, he had been indifferent (except in the case of Bibles and service-books) to the mere exterior of the copies which he so assiduously collected, thus giving the *tone*, so to speak, to the literary efforts of the brethren, whose object was rather to transcribe large numbers of books, and distribute them freely (often even gratuitously), than to shine as artistic copyists in the eyes of bibliophiles, such as the spectacled collector of "unprofitable books" in *The Ship of Fools*. The German Reformation, and, it may be added, the advance of learning and research in Germany, owe much to this early zeal for the cheap diffusion of good literature. Groot's successor, as has been seen, was no scholar by taste or training; while a Brother of simple soul, like Ketel the cook, when asked on his deathbed in what ways the Brotherhood in his opinion needed improvement, made answer that, for one thing, they had too many books, and would do well to sell such as were superfluous for the good of the poor. But the genius of the institution prevailed over such misgivings, with which, I need hardly say, should not be confounded the repeated warnings of Thomas a Kempis against the self-sufficiency of learning, whether sacred or profane. Many of the Brethren attained to considerable mechanical skill as copyists, among them pre-eminently Thomas himself, whose transcripts of the Bible (in four volumes) and of passages from St Bernard remain to attest his willingness to practise what he so eloquently preached: "If he shall not lose his reward who gives a cup of cold

water to his thirsty neighbour, what will not be the reward of those who, by putting approved works into the hands of their neighbours, open to them the foundations of eternal life?" Thus the Brethren were of direct and substantial service to the preservation and spread of the most important materials of religious study and of choice monuments of religious devotion. They continued to be of use in the same direction when (at a rather later date) they, in a few instances, took advantage of the new art of printing. The Brotherhood founded at Brussels about the year 1469 was soon afterwards busily engaged in the management of a printing-press; and two small societies in the neighbourhood of Mainz boasted of practising Gutenberg's art with the aid of his own instruments.

But, while the copying of books was neither in principle nor in practice carried on in the Brotherhoods as a labour pursued on its own account, the work of *education* had from the first been an integral part and an essential function of their common life. Not all the Brotherhoods had as a matter of course schools of their own—even at Deventer such was not the case at first; but, even where the existing school had not been set up by the Brethren, they boarded and lodged its pupils, or paid the fees of the poorer among them (the distinction between poor and rich scholars runs through the whole educational life of the Middle Ages), or supplied the school with books, or even with teachers. As a rule, however, every Brethren's House provided, at least for its own inmates, instruction in reading, writing, singing, and the Latin tongue, together with that all-pervading influence of a *common life* in which wise

judges have at all times recognised an invaluable moral and disciplinary aid to education. The efforts of the Brethren called into life throughout the Netherlands an active educational spirit which has never since deserted the country. Statistics are generally suspicious; and we may decline to be overcome by the statement that Cele's school at Zwolle, early in the 15th century, sometimes numbered nearly 1000, and the school at Hertogenbosch even 1200, pupils. But these figures at least testify to the wide diffusion of the elements of literary culture, and go some way towards explaining such accounts as those given in the next century of Amersfoort, where Latin was to be everywhere heard, even from the lips of the lowly, and Greek was, also, understood by the better-educated among the merchants. The services of the Brotherhoods to the intellectual progress of Europe were not, however, confined to the improving and supplementing of the schools in one particular country. They played a humble but important part in the great intellectual achievement of the age preceding that of the Reformation—the overthrow of Scholasticism.

The Artists' Faculty in a medieval university was little more than a grammar-school writ large, in which boys were grounded in the rudiments of the Latin grammar, with the aid of immutably established hand-books. Foremost amongst these was the Latin Grammar—i.e. the series of grammatical rules in rhyme—composed by Alexander de Villa Dei some time before his death in 1209—a book which had received the sanction of the Church, and thus reigned omnipotent in the schools of Europe during the better part of three cen-



turies. It was standard authorities of this description which the more intelligent and simple teaching encouraged by the Brethren overthrew, or at least subjected to a long-needed revision. The most famous of the teachers at Deventer was no doubt Alexander Hegius (of Heck, in Westphalia), who died near the close of the 15th century, as rector of the Latin school of the town, leaving nothing behind him but his clothes and his books, and among whose pupils a greater number of eminent men chose to reckon themselves than had actually sat on the benches under him. Together with him, and distinguished like him by both piety and scholarship, worked John Sinthius (Synthem), who was actually a member of the Brotherhood of the Common Life. It was he who daringly, and yet successfully, revised the famous *Doctrinale Puerorum* of Alexander de Villa Dei, and thereby rendered a signal service to education in the Netherlands and in Germany. (In educational, as in other reforms, it is usually the first step which costs the most trouble; nor was it so very long before one of the Obscure Ones was to be found lamenting the good old times of the Universities, when the *Partes Alexandri* and the *Dicta Ioannis Sinthenii* together were indispensable in a grammatical student's literary luggage.) Other of the Deventer Brethren followed the example of Sinthius, and the intelligent teaching of the Latin grammar was afterwards similarly cherished in the Brethren's establishments elsewhere. The accomplished "Ciceronian" Ascensius (of Asche, near Brussels), the friend of Erasmus and editor of Thomas a Kempis, declared himself deeply indebted to the teaching of the "Hiero-

nymians" of Ghent, a fraternity of the Common Life established there early in the 15th century. At Hertogenbosch, Gerard Cannyfius composed a new Latin Grammar; at Gröningen, Hermann Forrentinus was author of another, which went so far in the direction of simplifying instruction as to involve its author in a charge of heresy. The Brotherhoods may thus be said to have assumed the attitude of reformers in the matter of classical studies, and to have helped to cut the ground from under the old Scholastic training, which had treated the Latin tongue merely as an instrument for its own purposes, a "*sermo*" (to quote the Prologus to the Leipzig *Manuale Scholarium*) "*in quem omnes doctrinæ sunt translatae*." Yet, at the same time, as became their popular origin and character, these institutions cherished the use and even the study of the vulgar tongue, and encouraged the reading of the Bible and the use of the service-books in it, thus stimulating an educational movement which elsewhere (in Elsass) was to lead to results of national significance. The study of history, too, which was to be so vigorously prosecuted at Strassburg, was not altogether overlooked in the Netherlands; and perhaps, in these days of encyclopædias, some additional respect should be paid to the memory of the already mentioned Forrentinus, reputed the earliest compiler of a historical dictionary.

Thus already, in their early days, the Brotherhoods prepared and facilitated the entrance of Germany into the general current of the Renaissance; and, at the same time, their influence impressed upon the German Renaissance in particular, from its very beginning, its distinctive mark of seriousness and of association with

religious studies and religious life. For the Brethren never forgot what had been the primary purpose of the institution to which they belonged, and the guiding principle of the life of their Founder. They could not depend on any teaching, however good and sound, as on the one effective agency towards the end they had in view. "I am He," says the Divine Voice in the *Imitatio*, "who in an instant elevate a humble mind to comprehend more reasons of eternal truth than if a man had studied ten years in the schools." Accordingly, while cherishing the art of preaching in its amplest form (one has some difficulty in realising, even in connexion with Dutch pews, sermons extending over three or—with a pause in the middle—over six hours), they also attached much importance to popular afternoon addresses in the vulgar tongue, which were called *collations*. Carrying out in these different directions the purpose of their establishment, the Brotherhoods by their example, and occasionally even by their direct influence, contributed largely to the reformation of the existing Religious Orders, of whom, notwithstanding their own modest protests, they were in truth the natural competitors.

The jealousy and illwill of the Regulars had been naturally excited against the Brethren even in their early days, as they were in England against Wiclif's Simple Priests. Already in the lifetime of Gerard Groot, a Mendicant monk was (according to Thomas a Kempis) prevented only by Divine interposition—he died on the way—from calumniating at Rome the "man of God" whom he was bent upon ruining. Soon afterwards the Town Council of Kampen, the beautiful city on the



Zuyder Zee, expelled the friends of Groot who had opened an institution of the Common Life there. Graver troubles seemed to threaten, as the advance and increase of the Brotherhoods began seriously to affect the popularity and the profits of the Mendicants. A Dominican named Matthew Grabow formulated the charges against the Brethren in a controversial volume, accusing them of mortal sin, as having without monastic vows combined in monastic associations, and with scholastic exuberance further indicting them as murderers by implication and palpable false prophets. The Bishop of Utrecht having declined to listen to the charge, its author soon repeated it on what seemed the promising occasion of the great Council of Constance. But the representatives sent to Constance by the Deventer and Zwolle Brotherhoods, and by the Regular Canons of Windesem, were not destined to share the fate of Hus and Jerome. Their cause, which may be described as that of the permissibility of a Regular Religious life outside the established Orders, was eloquently pleaded by the great Paris Chancellor Gerson, whose party contributed so much to the doom of the Bohemian Reformers. Grabow had to recant, and his book was cast into the flames as heretical. The Deventer Brethren a few years afterwards repaid this recognition of their orthodoxy by taking the part of Pope Martin V in a conflict concerning the appointment to the see of Utrecht, in consequence of which an interdict had been proclaimed over the recalcitrant portions of the diocese, and more especially over the towns of Overysse. The result was the emigration of the Brethren to Zutphen, whence they did not return till after six years of exile

and suffering: another Papal bull (of Eugenius IV, in 1431) warning all authorities, spiritual or lay, against disturbing the pious and beneficent activity of the Brotherhood.

The half-century which followed was that of the most vigorous advance of the institution. Its settlements were to be found spreading from Holland and Friesland to Flanders and Brabant, and even extending beyond the Netherlands into Rhenish Germany; and, more sparsely, into other parts of the Empire. But these remoter foundations were mostly of later date and inferior importance, nor was it more than a pleasant form when (at Cologne in 1475) the Emperor Frederick III appointed the Brethren his and his successors' Vicars and Chaplains for ever. Perhaps, on the other hand, something of the spiritual influence exercised by the Brethren in that part of the Netherlands where they were most numerous, may be accounted for by the exceptional need which in this period arose for its exercise. From 1456 to 1496 the see of Utrecht was held by David of Burgundy (the half-brother of Charles the Bold), who was said to have done only one good deed during the whole course of his episcopate. Already, however, in this second period the institution of the Brotherhoods was—in accordance with an almost inevitable law—tending to merge itself in the general Monastic system of the Church of Rome. It has been noticed how, so soon as two years after the death of Groot, a monastery of Regular Canons in connexion with the Brotherhood of the Common Life, and following the rule of St Augustine, had been established at Windesem, near Zwolle, and how not long afterwards a

second Convent of the very simplest kind had been opened on Mount St Agnes, a little height pleasantly rising out of the "bush" near the same city, and watered at its base by a stream supplying the fish which formed so important a necessary of life in these as in other Convents. By the year 1340 there were already in existence not less than forty-five monastic establishments of the same kind and origin; and in the period just described this number had nearly trebled. The Convent at Windesem, however, always remained the institution in chief, and after it the whole body of these Convents in the Netherlands and in Germany were called the Windesem Congregations.

It is, however, to the second and humbler foundation of Canons Regular of the Common Life that we owe both what insight we can gain into their loftiest conceptions, and (unless the preponderance of opinion concerning the authorship of the *Imitatio Christi* be in error) the one enduring embodiment of these. Mount St Agnes was for seventy-two years the home of Thomas Hamerken, of Kempen (a tranquil little town formerly in the Archbishopric of Cologne, now in Rhenish Prussia, which at the present day has little to recall the memory which makes it illustrious, unless it be the humane consideration habitually paid in it to the inhabitants of its principal edifice, an asylum for the deaf and dumb). Seventy-two years—from his arrival there in 1399, in the twentieth year of his life, to the day of his death! "Blessed is he who has lived well in one and the same place, and made a happy end." The writer of these words was of humble birth, a handicraftsman's son; and it seems to have been the force of example



which attracted him into the life of which his own career was to become a lasting type. For the names of several other natives of Kempen occur among the Brethren or the Canons of the Common Life, and Thomas's own elder brother John, who had become a Canon at Windesem, and was afterwards the first Prior of the Convent at St Agnes, had preceded him on his way, on which a younger brother named Gobelinus seems afterwards to have followed him. Thomas spent six years as a scholar, and one as a Brother, at Deventer, residing during the last in the Florentius House, to whose founder and inmates he has erected an imperishable monument. Florentius, who had enabled him to go through his preparatory studies, acquiesced in his desire to devote himself to a monastic life; and thus, after not less than seven years of probation at St Agnes, he was in 1406 admitted as a Regular member of the Convent. "It is no small matter," he writes, "to dwell in a monastery, or in a congregation, and to live therein, without reproof, and to persevere faithfully till death." Doubtless, the good Thomas had his part in the trials incident to the inner life of all small communities, as well as in troubles of greater outward importance. He shared the three years' exile of his brother-Canons on the occasion of the episcopal troubles in 1425. After he had held the office of Sub-prior in the Convent, he lost it—perhaps in consequence of this very flight on shipboard; and was subsequently appointed to the post of Steward—the "office of Martha," as he calls it. He was ultimately again made Sub-prior, having in the interval held the appointment of Master of the Novices; and some of the discourses are preserved in which he

encouraged the piety of his charges, among other things by the narration of "modern instances," which have perhaps escaped the notice of those good Protestants who claim Thomas as a precursor of the Reformation. But it is not his theology which I can here pretend to discuss. In it he was a child of his times, and his writings breathe the particular atmosphere in which they were produced; the secret of the influence of his genius lies in the enthusiasm of his personal devotion. At one time he enforces his new γνώθι σεαυτὸν: "This is the highest and most profitable lesson, truly to know and to despise ourselves." At another, he can thus directly point the way to his ideal: "This is the reason why there are found so few contemplative men, because there are few who know how to separate themselves wholly from perishable and created things. For this a great grace is required, which may raise the soul and bear it above itself." Thus in him the contemplative side of the Common Life, to which the active is ministrant, is consummately shown forth. But the tranquillity which he seems to typify is not that of a repose obtained without effort, or enjoyed unbroken. The conscientious steward, the laborious copyist, the much-sought preacher, the rigorous ascetic, in his threescore years and twelve of retirement led a life which was no dream; "in all things," he was wont to say, "I have sought rest, but I have found it nowhere save in *hæxkens ende bæxkens*" (in nooks and in books).

Thomas a Kempis belongs in the greater part of his life to the second period in the history of the Brotherhoods, though he is the historian of the first. He had never known Groot, and Florentius had been

the paternal friend of his boyhood; and when he fell asleep himself after his long day's work, both Gerard and his friends had long passed away, though it was still nearly two centuries before the piety of a remote Brotherhood bore their remains to their last resting-place at Emmerich. About the time of Thomas's death that decline in the vigour and usefulness, though not as yet in the outward prosperity, of the institutions may be said to have begun, of which their modern historians have sufficiently traced the causes. These may, perhaps, not unfairly be summed up in the fact which institutions, like individuals, are so slow to recognise—the best of their work had been done. In general, the advance of the Renaissance in Germany had overtaken the efforts of the Brotherhoods and their schools, to which in its beginnings it had owed so much. In particular, the printing-press, which they only here and there took into their service, was beginning to supersede their own less efficacious method of multiplying books, in which so many of them had found a main support, as well as a distinctive badge, of their Common Life. The centre of both intellectual and spiritual effort was certainly no longer in the Low Countries; and though, when the day of the Reformation had arrived, Luther did his utmost to attest his warm admiration of the spirit and the practice of the Brotherhoods, it was hard indeed for them to choose their side—harder than either for purely ecclesiastical foundations on the one hand, or for purely academical bodies on the other. So their side was in very many instances *chosen for them*; in Protestant States their establishments were swept away, in Catholic their educational functions passed into the hands of the



Jesuits; while the Brethren's and Canons' and analogous Sisters' Houses became Convents of the ordinary type. Concerning the earlier part of this period of decay we possess a very curious piece of evidence (of which a quite unfair use has been made) in a letter addressed by Erasmus to the Pope's Secretary, and intended for the ear of the Pope himself. In it he tells the story of two young men whom, on their being left orphans with a small property, their designing guardians had resolved to bring up for a monastic life. When they were old enough to be sent to those schools "which are now called universities," the guardians, fearing the secular influence of such a place upon their wards, determined to place them in an establishment of those *Fratres Collationarii* "who now-a-days are to be found any- and everywhere, and who gain their living by teaching boys." The principal purpose of these brethren, continues Erasmus, is to break the spirit of their best pupils, and to mould them into fit subjects for a monastic life. The Dominicans and Franciscans declare that, without these seminaries, their own Orders would soon perish from inanition. "For my part," he adds, "I believe that these institutions may contain some honest men; but, as they all suffer from lack of the best authors, and in their obscurity follow their own usages and rules of life, *without comparing themselves with anyone but themselves*, I do not see how they can be Liberal educators of youth; and at all events the fact speaks for itself, that from nowhere issue forth young men with scantier scholarship and with viler manners." The younger of the two brothers knew more than his teachers did, one of whom he roundly described as the most

unlearned and boastful monster on whom he ever set eyes. "And such they very often entrust with the care of boys. For their teachers are not chosen according to the judgment of learned men, but by the *fiat* of the Patriarch, who very often knows nothing of Letters." The writer then relates how one of the two young men, after "losing two years or more" in one of these Houses was easily persuaded to take the vows in one of the establishments of those Brethren who rejoice in calling themselves *Canons*; while the other was with greater difficulty drawn into a net of the same kind, which was kept so tight over him that he could only hope to escape from it through the intervention of His Holiness.

Allowing a little for the pointedness of a style with which the Pope had good reason to be "singularly delighted," and allowing more for the burning hatred of monkery which animated Erasmus, we may see in this letter a picture, probably true enough in many cases, of the actual condition or growing tendency of the Brethren and their conventual establishments. In other instances, the Convents began to take thought of worldly things, to push the practice of trade and industry, and to develop that love of property which seems almost inevitable in a corporate body, and of which the germs may perhaps be detected even at St Agnes' in its early days. As time went on, no new afflatus manifested itself, but there was a noteworthy tenacity in the Common Life even when its institutions had become nothing more than an insignificant branch of the Conventual system of the diminished Church of Rome. As late as the year 1728, not fewer than thirty-four Convents sent their representatives to a general assembly of the Windesem Chapter.

The Brethren of Deventer and their foundations took no part, so far as I know, in any endeavour to heal the breach which the Reformation had effected. But Catholics and Protestants alike may acknowledge the efforts of men who helped to teach the modern world to love books without ceasing to love what is better than books, and who (though educational reformers in their generation) did not lose sight of the maxim of one of their number, that "there is a great difference between the wisdom of an enlightened and devout man, and the knowledge of a well-read and studious clerk."



### 3. REUCHLIN<sup>1</sup>

(*The Saturday Review*, November 25, 1871.)

THERE are several aspects under which a competent biography of Reuchlin invites attention; and Dr Ludwig Geiger, who brings special as well as general qualifications to his laborious task, cannot be accused of having mistaken the importance of any one of the main points of interest presented by its subject. The scholar to whom the study of Greek in Germany owes its revival, and the study of Hebrew its beginning, meets with judicious appreciation at the hands of his most recent biographer, who is at pains to indicate with considerable precision the intermediate, and, in a sense, connecting position occupied by Reuchlin between the older and the younger schools of German Humanists, between the fellow-labourers of Thomas a Kempis and the literary comrades of Ulrich von Hutten. But even the literary student will not disdain to allow that the name of Reuchlin is, above all, illustrious on account of the moral significance of his conduct at the crisis which, late in life, his career underwent. He is in no sense in which the term has any definite meaning to be regarded as one of the precursors of the Reformation—a title which, notwithstanding his occasional timidity, and his contentment with his personal standpoint, cannot be denied to Erasmus. But, though in his old age Reuchlin lived in the house of Eck, and looked coldly upon the first

<sup>1</sup> *Johann Reuchlin; sein Leben und seine Werke.* Von Dr Ludwig Geiger. Leipzig, 1871.

reformatory efforts of Melanchthon, he is chiefly remembered as a martyr to a cause dearer to the consciousness of our own times, dearer above all to the consciousness of his own nation in the age of its fuller intellectual and moral development, than any movement of religious Reform. That cause may be called by different names; but whether we choose to describe it as the cause of Science or as that of Toleration, it was upheld by Reuchlin in an age upon which its value had only begun to dawn, and it triumphed in his limited actual success, and in his absolute moral victory. Thus it is that the greatest men of Reuchlin's nation, as it were, join hands with him across the lapse of centuries. If, in his own day, it was the *clari viri*, the *illustres viri*, the leaders of intellectual progress, to whose applause and sympathy he could proudly appeal, while satire branded his adversaries with immortal ridicule, the great men of after ages could claim brotherhood with the modest champion who had stirred the nest of the ancestors of their own dunces and bigots, and who had bequeathed to posterity the example both of an arduous struggle and of a moral victory. Lessing had not forgotten the Dominicans of Cologne when he waged war upon his *Subconrector* and "Chief Pastor" of Hamburg; and Goethe, as Dr Geiger reminds us, loved to compare his own lifelong struggle against the friends of darkness with the unforgotten efforts of Reuchlin.

It is not to be wondered that, in our own times, those who recognise in the movement of the 15th century something more than the birth-time of a great religious schism, and who remember that it was not until the period which we call that of the Reformation proper

that this movement was narrowed into a theological conflict, should recur with ever fresh interest to the lives of the great men who lived before Luther. Reuchlin, as Dr Geiger well shows, belongs emphatically to a period of transition; he stands in the middle between the calm and self-concentrated efforts of the earlier labourers in the cause of intellectual and moral progress, tinged rather than transformed by the first rays of the Humanistic revival, and the many-sided and audacious onset of the contemporaries of his own later years. When his life closed, the better part of the glorious inheritance of which Italy would have fain claimed a monopoly had been secured to Germanic Europe; but, though he lived to see the Reformation, he witnessed its beginnings without sympathy, and would, beyond a doubt, have plainly disapproved of its ulterior course. Thus he, whom Strauss, of all men, the best qualified to know what the phrase implies, calls the first man of learning of the modern style (*der erste Gelehrte neuen Stils*), was unwilling to break wholly with the past. In what sense is he deserving of so proud a title, and why may he be claimed as a venerated fellow-labourer by men who recognise no finality even in the movement which to him was distasteful as an unnecessary rupture?

No man creates his age; and, when Reuchlin commenced his career as a scholar, his native Germany, and in particular those regions of it in which his life was spent, had already made a considerable advance in the pursuit of learning for its own sake. Yet, unlike many of the Humanists a little junior to himself with whom he came into friendly contact, he was still obliged to pursue his studies *ἐκ παρέργου* rather than as the



main occupation of his life. By profession he was a lawyer, and he had also served his Prince, the famous Duke Eberhard of Württemberg, in several of those diplomatic missions on which sovereigns of the 15th and 16th centuries were wont to employ their servants learned in the law. After the death of Eberhard, one of the most patriotic and open-minded Princes of his age (it was he who had caused the first two Philippics of Demosthenes, translated by Reuchlin, to be distributed as a stimulus against France), and the removal of his successor and namesake, stormy times had begun in Swabia; for Duke Ulrich had in 1503, the seventeenth year of his life, assumed the reins of government. Of his turbulent career we have spoken in this journal on a previous occasion<sup>1</sup>; its central crime endures for ever in the burning invectives of Ulrich von Hutten. Reuchlin, a few years after this, in 1511, resigned his post as Judge-commissioner of the Swabian League, and after thirty-one years of public service—he was now fifty-five years of age—sought the retirement of a studious life. But it was precisely at this time that he was destined to be involved in the great quarrel which is inseparably associated with his name.

This quarrel was due to Reuchlin's proceedings as a legal functionary; but it derived its importance from his position as a scholar. That position had not been gained at once. Nothing is more characteristic of Reuchlin than the laborious fulness with which he pursued every study to which he devoted himself. As a lawyer, he expressed his amusement at the young students "who in their first year think they can decide

<sup>1</sup> See *The Saturday Review*, July 8th, 1865.

any dispute, in their second begin to doubt, and only begin to learn in their third, when they find that they know nothing." He encouraged the study of history, even if he was not, as Melanchthon believed, himself the author of a *History of the World*. But it was, of course, philological study in which he most enthusiastically engaged. He had not, indeed, as Dr Geiger shows, that contempt for his own German tongue which was characteristic of his age, and which is amusingly illustrated by an edict of the Austrian Government to the students of the Vienna University in the year 1499—*ne in vulgaribus, ubi penitus nulla originalis scientia continetur, imbuerentur*. He produced several translations into his native language, and the book which, as we shall see, brought down upon him the wrath of his enemies was written in German. But, as a scholar, he used the language of scholars, Latin; and at a very early period of his life he had published his *Vocabularius Breviloquis*, a Latin dictionary, which went through not less than twenty-five editions. Yet the Latinity of Reuchlin was not that of an Erasmus, although he was the first German of his age to venture upon an imitation of Terentian Comedy. But the writing of Ciceronian Latin was not an art of sudden growth, and could perhaps be least expected to be rapidly brought to perfection by a lawyer. Curiously enough, Reuchlin's great quarrel with the Obscure Ones was destined to contribute indirectly to the overthrow of Scholastic Latin hardly less than to the overthrow of Scholastic Theology. The immortal satire which it provoked against his opponents taught aspirants to the art of Latin composition what it behoved them to avoid more effectually

than a hundred grammars and phrase-books. German ecclesiastics, and we venture to add German philologists, have written some doubtful Latin since; but the darkest age of Latin prose composition has passed away with Frater Conradus Dollenkopfius and Herbordus Mistladerius. As to their bugbear, the great "Capnion" personally, Erasmus opined that he was indeed *vir magnus, sed oratio redolebat suum seculum adhuc horridius impolitusque*.

To the advance of the study of Greek Reuchlin's services were inferior only to those of Erasmus himself, and they began, of course, at a considerably earlier date. He published translations from the Greek both in his native tongue and in Latin; of the latter only some have come down to us. But he was not content with making the matter of Greek authors accessible to the world at large; he insisted upon the necessity of a faithful study of the original texts; wines, he said, which are poured from one cask into another lose their fine taste. His own Greek reading is shown by Dr Geiger to have been astonishingly extensive; he was also the author of a Greek grammar, which unfortunately was never published. One of the very few things which are "generally known" concerning Reuchlin—namely, that he was the originator of a method of Greek pronunciation—is not to be accepted as a fact at all. He pronounced Greek like his teachers, the Greeks themselves. Erasmus introduced a new method of pronunciation, which had been communicated to him by accident as the method actually in vogue among certain Greeks; but in his *Dialogus* on the subject he makes no reference to Reuchlin. What is quite certain is that neither Reuchlin



nor Erasmus was, or professed to be, an inventor; and that both made appeal to what, not foreseeing the protests of modern comparative philologists, they, very naturally, regarded as the only kind of authority on the subject.

But we must pass to Reuchlin's third, or rather, according to his own proud statement, his "fifth tongue." As he had learnt French and Italian, and as he had learnt Greek, from living lips, so he derived his knowledge of Hebrew, which owes to him its establishment as a subject of scientific study among moderns, from his acquaintance with members of the particular, despised people, who treasured it as their most precious inheritance. The ordinance of the Council of Vienne, which commanded the foundation of Hebrew Chairs at the principal Universities of the Continent, had remained all but a dead letter; and no German University was included in the number. At Paris, Reuchlin had learnt no Hebrew; in Italy, he at first found it extremely difficult to obtain an Old Testament in the original tongue. Alone he ventured into the *terra incognita* of this new study. The difficulties surrounding it are incomprehensible to our age. The few Jews in Württemberg held themselves prohibited by an ordinance of the Talmud from imparting to a Christian the knowledge of their tongue. It was only by a happy accident that, on a mission to the Emperor Frederick III, in the year 1492, Reuchlin found a learned Jew, Jacob ben Jehiel Loans, in the position of body-physician to the Emperor. This learned man became Reuchlin's teacher in Hebrew, and was long afterwards gratefully recognised by him as such. For the Christian

world he remained himself, for nearly a generation, the solitary teacher of this language. It was only quite towards the close of his life that the study of Hebrew began to be pursued at the Universities. Up to that time, in Dr Geiger's words, "all who desired thoroughly to learn the language were obliged, almost exclusively, to have resort to Reuchlin." And all who had resort to him (his grand-nephew Melanchthon was among the number) found him ever willing to communicate his treasures, and to communicate them, like Socrates of old, gratuitously.

It was in his relation to the study of Hebrew (which, as a matter of course, he regarded as the mother-tongue of all other languages) that Reuchlin necessarily came into contact with the theology of his age. Our theologians, he complained, neglect the words of Holy Scripture in order to attend to the dialectic sophisms of Aristotle. On the other hand, though far from being elevated above all prejudice against the hereditary adversaries of Christianity, he respected in the Jews a people which, through the course of the centuries, had preserved the Sacred Text pure and intact. It was, he thought, the duty of Christians to treat the Jews with gentleness and kindness; to allow them the full benefit of the law; to convert them by argument, and to acquire the means to that end by causing their language to be publicly taught, and their books to be translated; *denique summa summarum, in jure scriptum est quod Judæi tanquam proximi nostri a nobis diligendi sunt*. Thus it was that Reuchlin, instead of contenting himself with the study of the Old Testament and free criticism of the errors of the Vulgate version, passed boldly to

enquiry into, and comment upon, other Jewish literature. In the course of this research he became acquainted with the mysterious teachings of the Cabbalah, and, like Pico of Mirandola before him, sought to discover in the secret teachings of the Rabbins the means of converting the Jews out of the mouths of their own doctors. In his attempt to develop the foundations of Christian belief out of a combination of Jewish with Greek philosophy, he satisfied himself, if but few of his contemporaries; and it is probable that he lacked the clearness of thought which alone could have given any fruitful effect to his labours. To us moderns it is simply impossible to pursue speculations on the mysterious significance of the letters of the Old Testament, and of their correspondence to the Pythagorean numbers. But these speculations are not to be regarded as the essence of Reuchlin's system; rather, they only constitute an attempt to bring to book, if we may use the expression, the mystic conception of the union of God and man, which had pervaded the minds of a Ruysbroeck or a Thomas a Kempis. The attempt remained sterile; it was equally repugnant to Luther's desire for the tangible and to Melanchthon's dislike of the fanciful; while Erasmus contented himself with observing that *nunquam mihi neque Talmud, neque Cabbala arrisit*. On the other hand, Reuchlin's book *On the Miraculous Word* provoked a bristling rejoinder from Jacob Hochstraten, the Dominican Supervisor of Heretics (*Ketzermeister*) of Cologne.

But it was in no immediate connexion with his Cabbalistic studies that Reuchlin became involved in the great dispute concerning the books of the Jews which forms the most generally interesting chapter of



his biography. Dr Geiger has given a circumstantial account of this episode, and refers for part of it, with praiseworthy modesty, to a vigorous chapter in Strauss's *Life of Hutten*, which a popular edition has just brought within reach of a wider public. In either work the reader will find a clear account of one of the most determined struggles which bigotry has ever waged against reason and justice, though, happily, the contest ended in this instance in a war of words.

It is known how, at the close of the 15th century, the Dominicans of the Inquisition succeeded in bringing about the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal, and it has often been assumed that a similar scheme, on the part of the German Dominicans, lay at the root of the proceedings which were nominally the work of certain converted German Jews. But there seems to be no proof of any such deep-laid plan; and, indeed, Reuchlin's biographer, with a turn of phrase betraying something more than the indignation of a historical student, observes that "baptised Jews have never needed a party to put them forward and make use of them, in order to calumniate those whom they had formerly loved." For the prime mover in the agitation against the books of the Jews was, as is well known, a baptised Jew of the name of Pfefferkorn. Whatever may have been the motives of this worthy, there can be no doubt that the ground of his attack upon his former fellow-believers lay in the publicity which the art of printing was beginning to give to the Rabbinical works. In his *Judenspiegel*, published in 1507, he demanded that the Jews should be deprived of their books, which were the chief cause of their perversity. To demand the expulsion

of the Jews themselves was only an afterthought of desperation.

The demand of Pfefferkorn agreed but too well with the principles of the Dominicans, who claimed the censorship over all books by virtue of a Papal authority, for them to hesitate about giving it their support. But no step could be taken against the Jews without an appeal to the Emperor, at whose disposal their property lay. For, just as in England, up to the expulsion of the Jews under Edward I, they were technically the property of the Crown, so in the Empire they were the servants of the Imperial *Kammer* or Exchequer. This placed their possessions under the absolute control of the Emperor Maximilian I, who received the eager Pfefferkorn in his camp before Padua, granted him powers to demand from the Jews throughout the Empire such books as were directed against the Christian faith, and, with the consent of the parish priest and two secular magistrates, to suppress them. In order, as Dr Geiger suggests, to surround his undertaking with a halo of scholarship, Pfefferkorn, on his return from Italy, called upon Reuchlin at Stuttgart to request his cooperation; but Reuchlin very speedily sent him about his business. He was not, however, to escape becoming involved in this distasteful effort of a meddlesome convert. Pfefferkorn had attempted to stretch his powers, and to force the Jews at Frankfort to deliver up *all* their books. The stir created by this unwarranted demand had finally induced the Emperor to wash his hands of the affair, so far as lay in his power, by entrusting its further conduct to the Archbishop-Elector of Mainz, who was to consult a mixed Commission on the question of the

nature of the books confiscated by Pfefferkorn. This Commission included, besides representatives of four Universities, the Cologne Supervisor of Heretics, a Jewish convert of note named Victor von Karben, and Reuchlin. Meanwhile, the Jews for the present received their property back; and the Universities and Reuchlin were each called upon to draw up an opinion on the nature of the Jewish books. It may be added that, in the sequel, the Jews never seem to have been ordered to surrender them again.

Reuchlin's opinion on the question thus referred to him was the origin of the persecution to which he was afterwards exposed; it is, at the same time, his chief title to honourable remembrance in the history of the progress of Religious Toleration. He divided the Jewish books into two unequal classes—namely, works manifestly containing injurious attacks upon Christianity, and others not open to such a charge. The former, of which he only names two—which two he moreover states to be prohibited among the Jews themselves—he proposes, after they have been sufficiently examined and legally condemned, to devote to destruction, their possessors being subjected to punishment; for the rest, which include the Talmud, the Cabbalah, the Commentaries on the Bible, the sermons and hymns of the Jews, and their works on non-theological subjects, he claims full toleration. They contain no vituperation of Christianity; that they do not recognise the divinity of Christ is a matter of course; for “such is their belief, by which they mean to injure no man.” The Christians, he urges, have no *right* to proceed against these books. The Jews are subject to God not less than the Christians;



if they act wrongly, God will punish them. No Christian has a claim to decide concerning the creed of those who are not Christians. Moreover, even secular law prohibits any such intervention; for the Jews are members and citizens of the Germanic Empire. The contemplated distinction, he continues, cannot be expected to lead to the extirpation of the Jewish faith; so much is only to be looked for from endeavours to convert the Jews by gentle means, and for this purpose it is necessary to learn the real nature of their teachings, for which a systematic study of their language is indispensable.

Such was Reuchlin's declaration of views, which indeed breathe the spirit of a more clear-sighted and a more generous age than his own. Of the other opinions, all but one (which temporised) were in a directly contrary sense. And now the storm broke loose upon his devoted head. Pfefferkorn launched his *Handspiegel* against Reuchlin, whom he accused of having been bribed by the Jews; and Reuchlin replied with his *Augenspiegel* (*Speculum Oculare*) in which he indignantly denied the insolent imputation, and refuted thirty-three additional lies advanced against him. At the same time, it is impossible to suppress a wish that Reuchlin had maintained in his pamphlets the firm tone assumed in his Opinion. He adheres in the main to the standpoint of the latter; but there are some modifications and some explanations in a not very natural sense, which it would be pleasant for a biographer of Reuchlin less honest than Dr Geiger to be able to forget. Yet the *Augenspiegel* became the cause of the persecution by which the Cologne Dominicans hereupon attempted to silence him. We have no space left to pursue the complicated course of the struggle. It was conducted on both sides with

unflagging energy. Reuchlin's book was condemned by most of the German Universities, as well as by Louvain; and even at Paris it was ordered to be burnt, and he was called upon to recant. Then, an attempt, frustrated by the interference of the Emperor, was made to have the book condemned by the Inquisitional Tribunal at Mayence; and, finally, after Reuchlin and his work had been acquitted at Speier, an appeal found its way to Rome, where, after endless efforts on either side, a mandate *de supersedendo* quashed proceedings, without allowing a triumph to either party. Pope Leo X in this way satisfied at once his literary and his political conscience; and after Rome had spoken, or rather had declined to speak, the matter seemed at an end (1516).

But its significance was not destined to pass away. Not only had the attempt at persecuting the Jews failed, and the attempt at crushing the advocate of Tolerance likewise broken down; but his enemies had made his cause the cause of what now for the first time appeared before Europe in the form of a united party. Round the venerable figure of Reuchlin all the friends of learning and enlightenment, all the Humanists throughout Germany, had banded together in support of what they recognised as a cause common to them all. Mutianus and Erasmus, Melanchthon and Œcolampadius, and twoscore other names shone in the list of those who had openly testified to him their sympathy and admiration. And who stood on the opposite side—on the side of the Dominican Hochstraten and the converted Jew Pfefferkorn? Hochstraten's subsequent successor, Arnold von Tungern, and the first light of the orthodox University of Cologne, Magister Ortuinus Gratius, and—the correspondents of Ortuin. For the names of these

Obscure Ones, the authors of their *Letters*, the wicked Crotus and the reckless Hutten, are responsible; but collectively they are assured of a typical immortality<sup>1</sup>. Reuchlin himself was not a man of heroic mould; but his learning and intelligence, and his native uprightness, had left him no choice but to speak as he thought, when challenged to give a solemn declaration of opinion. The eager and angry bigotry of his adversaries made him a martyr, and converted an attempt to snatch a victory for intolerance into the first great demonstration on behalf of moral and intellectual freedom which Europe had witnessed. He died not long afterwards, in 1522, in his sixty-eighth year. In his old age, after the struggle of his life was over, he had for the first time taught from his proper place, a University chair; students had flocked to his feet at Ingolstadt, which, according to a Jesuit critic, ran the risk of losing the true faith by reason of his Hebrew lectures. But no danger threatened the Church from the illustrious old man, who soon afterwards ended his days in his beloved Swabia, where, at Tübingen, he instructed his last pupils in the grammar of Greek and Hebrew. Reuchlin was not an aggressive reformer, and he can only be called a reformer at all, if the name is to be applied to all who in their own sphere of action aid in the advance of enlightenment, and who, when summoned to avow or renounce their conviction of the truth, are not ashamed openly to declare it. There are grander and more splendid figures than his in the history of his native land; but there is none more truly representative of that noble product of ancient lore and Christian life—the German scholar.

<sup>1</sup> As to Reuchlin's adversaries, see the following paper.



#### 4. *EPISTOLÆ OBSCURORUM VIRORUM*<sup>1</sup>

(*The Quarterly Review*, January 1912.)

WHAT, we wonder, would the writers—both the real and the pretended—of the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* have said to the publication of an English version of these famous productions? The sapient monks and theologians who figured as the signatories of the original *Letters*, the unlearned scribes who wrote down Sallust a poet and believed that Suetonius composed Cæsar's *Commentaries* (since Cæsar himself could not have found time to learn Latin), would hardly have credited such a linguistic achievement, or, like one of them, Petrus de Wormatia—who did not wish, in addition to the Latin Homer, to see the other Homer in Greek, of which he had remotely heard—would have preferred not to be troubled with it. The real authors of the *Epistolæ*, the scholars militant whose ruthless satire raised such a potholer over the heads of the anti-Reuchlinists that this charge of light horse virtually, though not actually, closed the battle, could not but have been pleased by such a mark of recognition; especially as the very first edition of the first volume of the *Letters* had (probably through Richard Croke, then lecturing on Greek at Leipzig) been received with applause in England. But it may be questioned whether they would have thought the compliment as happy as it was wellmeant. Mr Stokes, an accomplished scholar, has (as his preface shows) insight and sense of humour enough to have made him

<sup>1</sup> The *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*. Translated by F. G. Stokes, 1912. Latin text with English rendering, notes and introduction, by F. G. Stokes, 1909.

fully aware of the difficulties of the task which he imposed upon himself. But he was determined to face them, on the strength of his belief that, far from "the humour and satiric force of the *Epistolæ*" depending "mainly on the droll vileness of their Latinity"... "the edge of the satire could not wholly be blunted even by the crudest translation." Even, however, if this were so, the shallowness, the density, and the vindictive insolence which were the real subject of the satire cannot, without a deplorable loss of effect, be separated from the pedantry, the banality, and the gross rudeness of the form in which they were intentionally clothed.

The art of translation, and not the least of English translation, is protean, and has exercised itself, not without some success, upon the genial extravagance of Rabelais and the subtle irony of Montaigne. But we doubt whether it could, in any case, succeed in assimilating to the texture of any modern language but the German vernacular of the Obscure Ones the "blend" between this form of speech and "culinary" Latin that makes up much of their unconscious fun. In a German version (though we believe one has been attempted) the joke would be spoilt in a different way. It may be possible to translate their expletives and their queer asseverations and phrases<sup>1</sup>; but how reproduce, in our tongue, the laughable effect of the use of *unus* as an indefinite article (*et dedit ei unum Knipp*, i. 5); or the use of *semel* in the vague fashion of the German *mal* (*einmal*); or the rendering of *dass*, in whatever way the conjunction is introduced, by *quod*; or the employment of

<sup>1</sup> *Vel est damnum quod vivo* (i. 26); *vel non sum ex legitimo thoro natus* (i. 42); *valeatis per tot annos quot vixit Matusalem* (ii. 14).

*mittere* as a quasi-auxiliary like the German *lassen* or the Anglo-Irish *let*? The formulas of academical speech, of logical disputation in particular, are more easily transferred, and are, for instance, so introduced, in ridicule of themselves, in the Elizabethan drama. On the other hand, the element of obscenity is almost an integral one in the comic literature of the Renaissance, as it had been in that of the Middle Ages; and in the *Epistolæ* it asserts itself with the cynical relish of monastic whisperings and the boisterous unconcern of students' talk. Mr Stokes, who professes himself unable to be very angry with his "saucy simpletons," is at pains to paraphrase, or otherwise water down, "instances" of this description, with the result of utterly puzzling the reader who refrains from turning to the original.

Finally, he should have remembered that the Obscure Ones, though in one sense, no doubt, they are innocent of style, yet, in another, have a style of their own. It consisted of a conjunction of what he calls the "pseudo-vernacular" Latin of their day with the pedantic usage of the Schools, the facetiously-coloured Latinity of the academical "quodlibets" and of other comic literature of the age, and the sober but inelegant Latin of the Vulgate. All this is flavoured with an extra dose of bad grammar (*istæ poetæ*) and impossible syntax (*dedi unum carlinum pro*), and soured in the flat pedestrianism of speech common to the vulgar of all times and tongues, especially when they write letters. Mr Stokes renders this peculiar compound in what may be described as the English of our own day, interspersed at random with Elizabethan or other earlier fragments of speech, with a word or two of Latin or



German and (as of course was in the circumstances unavoidable) with passages from our English Bible, which by their nobility contrast strangely with their non-descript surroundings. On the other hand, we should be sorry not to acknowledge that these *Letters* are throughout translated with a clear insight into the significance of every part of the text, while some of them are reproduced with much spirit; as, for instance, the wellknown exordium which contains a protracted play on the word *scribere*<sup>1</sup>. Even among the verse translations, which with their macaronic mixture generally fail to convey much notion of the formless *Knittelverse* of the originals—"what have I to do with feet," asks Wilhelmus Storch of Deventer (ii. 27); "I am not a heathen poet but a theological"—the elegy beginning "Old Finck is dead" (ii. 54) deserves some praise, albeit "right Corsic" is a rather dark rendering of *Corsica vina*.

Mr Stokes has added to the original text, which precedes in this handsome volume his English version of the *Epistolæ*, a series of notes "mainly intended for readers who have made no special study of the period involved," and taken largely from the extra volumes of what he rightly describes as Böcking's "monumental edition of Hutten's works," though supplemented from the stores of the editor's own learning. He has further written a useful, but far from exhaustive, Introduction, in which he signifies his general assent to the conclusions reached by Brecht, following up the suggestions of previous writers, as to the author-

<sup>1</sup> i. 15. The device is repeated with the catchword *stimulus* in i. 32.

ship of these *Epistles*. To these conclusions, which may be regarded as finally settling the question, we shall return.

Almost the earliest German University<sup>1</sup> to feel the direct influence of Italian Humanism was Erfurt, where the arrival of the first "poets" who leavened the lump of German academical teaching may be traced back to the third quarter of the 15th century. Erfurt, whose relations to the religious movement begun by Hus had at first seemed so marked as to give rise to the proverbial phrase, "Erforda Praga," did not ultimately pass beyond a strong sympathy with the ideas of the Reformers, and a corresponding antipathy to Rome and her adherents. On the other hand, the University, by the last decade of the 15th and the opening years of the 16th centuries, had become an avowed home of Humanistic studies. This growing reputation was established on a broader and more enduring basis in Erfurt's greatest period, which may be reckoned from about 1505 to about 1520, and is identified with the name of Mutianus Rufus (Conrad Mut), the "tranquil" Canon of Gotha, to whom (as is often the case) a body of scholars in the neighbouring University, in many instances more active and productive than himself, looked up as their intellectual leader. It was in Mutian's circle, there can be no doubt, that the conception of the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* first took rise, though, as will be seen, it was not at Erfurt itself that either the first or the second series of the letters was actually indited.

<sup>1</sup> The earliest of all was Heidelberg, where Peter Luder let his light fitfully shine from 1456 to 1460, when he quitted his native Palatinate to try his fortunes at Erfurt and Leipzig.

Reuchlin, round whom the contention blazed, was not himself cast in an heroic mould; on the other hand, neither was he one of those men of letters (or science) who find a personal satisfaction in posing as martyrs to the cause, actual or pretended, of freedom or light or progress. But there are crises in literary, as well as in scientific, history, the significance of which needs no writing on the wall, and in which the name of a man of true metal becomes the fit symbol of a struggle for the right. The conflict between Reuchlin and the Reuchlinists on the one side, and the Cologne Dominicans, with their shameless agent and their unlucky mouthpiece on the other, was thus something more than a controversy conducted on the part and on behalf of a leading scholar of his age, the man of three—or, as he himself loved to say, of five—tongues, against the upholders of what was utterly dry and dead in the learning and teaching of contemporary Germany. The principle of Toleration, clearly enunciated by Reuchlin, was recognised to be at stake by every friend of freedom and of that justice which is the foundation of freedom; and posterity, by the mouths of such men as Lessing and Goethe, has approved this interpretation of the struggle and its issue.

It was, of course, his Hebrew studies, and more especially his interest in the Cabbalah—the theosophic commentaries which from about the last quarter of the 8th century A.D. began to discuss the doctrinal essence of the Old Testament—which involved Reuchlin in the great quarrel concerning the books of the Jews. The cause of the famous controversy of which the *Epistolæ*, though they cannot be said to have materially con-



tributed to its issue, form an enduring literary monument, has been frequently narrated, and is summarised in the paper on Reuchlin printed earlier in this volume, as well as by Mr Stokes in his Introduction. The monstrous demand raised by Johannes Pfefferkorn, a Jewish convert to Christianity (Mr Stokes, rather oddly, calls him "renegade"), in his *Judenspiegel* (1507) that the Jews should be deprived of their books as the chief cause of their perversity, had been accompanied by further proposals of persecution, and was ultimately extended to a cry for their expulsion from the Empire, where, it must be remembered, they were still without legal rights. But, in the first place, everything turned upon the Jewish books. After obtaining, in August 1509, an Imperial mandate ordering all the Jews in the Empire to give up to him, in the presence of the priest and two official laymen, all their books directed against the Christian faith or "running counter to their own law," Pfefferkorn had attempted to secure the services of Reuchlin, the only competent Hebrew scholar in Germany, in the drawing-up of a list of books to be confiscated. But Reuchlin had refused; and Pfefferkorn had to act on his own account. In the course of the proceedings which hereupon took place, the Emperor (in July 1510) ordered the Archbishop to require written opinions on the whole question raised by Pfefferkorn from the four Universities of Cologne, Mainz, Erfurt and Heidelberg, and from certain persons of note. These last included, together with Reuchlin and the priest Victor von Karben (according to Mr Stokes a converted Rabbi) as Hebrew "specialists," the redoubtable Dominican, Jacob von Hochstraten or

Hoogstraten (a Brabanter by birth), who exercised the office of *Ketzermeister* under the Inquisition at Cologne, and whose functions ultimately expanded into the supervision of aberrations from the faith in the three archiepiscopal provinces of Cologne, Mainz and Treves<sup>1</sup>.

It is at this point that the famous controversy between Reuchlin and his supporters on the one side, and the Cologners on the other, really opens. The Universities of Cologne and Mainz, with whom Hochstraten and the priest Victor von Karben agreed, were in favour of taking away all the books, or, at any rate, all except the Old Testament; while the University of Heidelberg temporised, and Erfurt opined in favour of leaving to the Jews all their books but those which abused or falsified the Christian faith. Reuchlin's opinion, however, went to the root of the matter.

His clear and broad-minded declaration<sup>2</sup> necessarily came at once to the knowledge of Pfefferkorn; and his counterblast was soon ready. In the spring of 1511 appeared, in German, the *Handspiegel*, a virulent attack upon Reuchlin, whom the tract accused of having been bribed by the Jews. And now the fray burst forth into full flame. In September Reuchlin retorted with the *Speculum Oculare* (*Augenspiegel*), in which he gave the lie to his assailant's main and subsidiary assertions, but, while indulging in a vituperative vein characteristic of the times rather than of himself, also descended to certain explanations and modifica-

<sup>1</sup> *M. Jacobus Hochstraten hereticometra* appears as author of one of the books with bogus titles in the library of St Victor, in *Pantagruel*, chap. vii.

<sup>2</sup> It is summarised *ante*, pp. 82-3.

tions. Yet, since Reuchlin's opinion was a confidential document, it was upon his *Augenspiegel* that his adversaries seized as the handle for the proceedings by which they thought to crush him, but which, instead, rallied nearly the whole body of German Humanists in his defence. He was at first ill-advised enough to enter into correspondence, half explanatory, half deprecatory, with members of the Cologne Theological Faculty. In return, claiming, by virtue of its connexion with the Inquisition, a right of censorship extending over the Empire at large, the Faculty bade him call in and destroy the copies of the *Augenspiegel* on which he could lay his hands, and make a public declaration of his hostility to the Jews, and to the Talmud in particular.

Hereupon, Reuchlin answered his censors in a different vein. Appealing to the support of those poets and Humanists who respected him as their teacher, he broke off all negotiations and proceeded to publish in German a number of salient passages in the *Augenspiegel*. The Cologners, thereupon, put forward one of the most respected of their champions in the person of Arnold von Tungern, whom Mr Stokes describes as Dean of the Faculty of Theology, but Böcking as Dean of the Faculty of Arts; he subsequently succeeded Hochstraten as *Ketzermeister*, and left behind him a high reputation for munificence as well as learning. His *Articuli sive Propositiones*, dedicated to the Emperor, must have helped to obtain an Imperial decree (October 1512) ordering the confiscation of Reuchlin's book; but the execution of this was so slow as to render it futile. Tungern's arguments had been accompanied by verses composed in part by Ortuinus Gratius, who called down



the vengeance of Heaven upon Reuchlin. They were not quite the first appearance in this particular arena of the accomplished gladiator in question, whom Mr Stokes is perhaps rather severe in designating a "kept humanist." So many bad names were called in this and contemporary controversies, that modern criticism is well-advised in preserving a more restrained tone<sup>1</sup>.

Ortuinus Gratius (whose real name was Græs, though the Obscure Men thought its latinised form to be derived either from *gratia* or from the Gracchi) had already, during the outburst of pamphlets which followed upon the publication of Pfefferkorn's *Juden-spiegel*, translated into Latin four productions similar to it in tenour, and in one of these versions had displayed his talent for epigram. A Westphalian by birth, and, notwithstanding the slanders of the *Epistolæ*, for all we know, of respectable parentage on his mother's as he certainly was on his father's side<sup>2</sup>, he had been educated under Hegius at Deventer, where he afterwards taught. In the *Epistolæ* a whole posse of Obscure Ones, from the salacious Conrad of Zwickau to Joannes Vickelphius himself, *humilis sacræ theologiæ professor* (whose name perhaps conceals some allusion to Wiclif), claim the honour of his acquaintance or the benefit of his instruction. But it would be a mistake to suppose him to have been isolated as a "poet" among the theologians at Cologne, where by this time Humanism had many

<sup>1</sup> Luther, in a letter to Spalatin, terms the chief victim of the *Epistolæ* *asinum, canem, immo lupum rapacem, si non potius crocodilum*.

<sup>2</sup> His paternal uncle provided for the cost of his education; his maternal, according to *Epistolæ*, ii. 62, was hangman at Halberstadt.

representatives, and where students were found entering, *eo nomine*, as students of humanity. In 1501 he matriculated at Cologne, and until his death in 1542 he seems (like Kant at Königsberg) never to have set foot outside his University. He was active there as professor in the *Bursa Cucana* (Kueck's hostel), and as corrector for the press. As to his versatility there can be little doubt; for his *Orationes quodlibeticæ* dealt with all the subjects of both *trivium* and *quadrivium*; and he was not altogether devoid of wit, though it was very thinly beaten out. For the rest, he seems, as time went on, to have grown more rather than less to trust in his opinions, and he lived to praise Reuchlin.

In the phrase of one of the *Epistolæ* (ii. 62), Hochstraten, Tungern and Gratius were the *tria magna candelabra sive lucernæ* of the orthodox at Cologne, to whom "some add" Johannes Pfefferkorn, as a "lantern or hanging-lamp." The *Brantspiegel* of the last-named (end of 1512) having repeated the twofold charge against Reuchlin of knowing no Hebrew and having been bribed by the Jews, he summed up his case in his *Defensio* (1513), which, while triumphantly refuting the accusation against his *Augenspiegel*, held the ancient University up to scorn as sunk into second childhood, and imputed blasphemy to Ortuinus Gratius, who had hailed the Blessed Virgin as *Alma Jovis Mater*. The *Epistolæ* (i. 24) go so far as to charge Reuchlin with "very unbecoming scandal-mongering" (*scandalizat valde dedecorose*) in his *Defensio*; nor was the pedantry all on one side.

The Emperor Maximilian, whose moods varied, was in June 1513 persuaded by Reuchlin to impose

silence on both parties in the dispute; but, only a month later, the Cologne Faculty obtained an Imperial mandate suppressing the *Defensio*. Encouraged by this success, it subsequently secured from the Universities of Cologne, Mainz and Louvain (judiciously substituted for Heidelberg) a condemnation of the still more obnoxious *Augenspiegel*—Erfurt couching its adhesion in a form complimentary to the author. And, in August 1514, the Paris Faculty of Theology, to Reuchlin's great chagrin, unanimously condemned the book. Meanwhile, Hochstraten had audaciously summoned Reuchlin before his tribunal at Mainz; but Pope Leo X, to whom both sides intended to appeal, committed the settlement of the dispute to the Bishops of Speier and Worms, or to one of them. Thus, in March 1514, the young and liberal-minded Count Palatine George, Bishop of Speier, gave his judgment, pronouncing the charges against the *Augenspiegel* unmerited, ill-considered, unjust, and untrue. Hochstraten was to pay the costs of the suit; but, before the judgment was delivered to him, he had already once more appealed to Rome, where the appeal was entertained.

The question had now become one of international significance. While, in plain-spoken and cordial words, Maximilian commended the case of his Councillor Reuchlin to the Holy See, his grandson Charles was writing to Leo X in a directly opposite sense, and the new King of France (Francis I) was urging him to follow the advice of the University of Paris. Hochstraten repaired in person to Rome, where, according to the *Epistolæ*, he at first appeared with much show of grandeur, *habens pecuniam in banco* (ii. 6), and



where on both sides endless wire-pulling set in. That corruption played its part in the game was unhesitatingly assumed by the writer of the Second Series (ii. 32): there is but one way in which to gain a cause at Rome; "if Reuchlin has any money, they say at the Curia, let him send it here." In the end, the Pope's Commission—according to the trustworthier account, with one dissentient voice—declared the *Augenspiegel* free from blame; but the Pope, instead of approving the verdict, issued a *mandatum de supersedendo*, which put off all further proceedings. Neither Hochstraten nor Reuchlin's proctor in Rome, the excellent Johann von der Wick (whose praises are implied in the *Epistolæ*, ii. 53, by the outpouring of a vial of wrath over the head of this *homo valde audax*), seems to have given up the hope of a favourable papal pronouncement; but it became clear, before long, that the attempt of the Cologners had failed, and that the decision of the Bishop of Speier, approved by the vote of the Commission at Rome, was permanently valid. The date of issue of the final papal mandate—July 1516—should be borne in mind in connexion with the appearance of the first and second volume respectively of the *Epistolæ*.

The writings for or against Reuchlin (published after he had, as it were, said his own last word), with which the Leipzig and Frankfort Fairs overflowed in these years, are, with the exception of the *Epistolæ*, all forgotten. To certain of the contributions to the dispute made by Ortuinus Gratius in the years 1514–15 reference will be made below. But note must be taken here of the collection of letters addressed to Reuchlin, published (no doubt by himself) in 1514 under the title

of *Epistolæ Clarorum Virorum*. These letters had no direct bearing upon the *Augenspiegel* controversy, which remained unmentioned in Melanchthon's introduction to the collection; but they sufficed to show who were the men that acknowledged Reuchlin as the head of their fraternity, and that could be depended upon to rally round him. Wherever the Humanists gathered, it was their custom to form *sodalitates* (intimate associations); and, as has been well pointed out by Brecht, the goodly company of the Obscure Ones itself is a sort of Humanist parody of this Humanist habit. At Erfurt, as has been seen, the Mutianic circle, of which Eobanus Hessus was the poet and Crotus Rubianus the humourist-in-chief, was foremost among the representative groups of German Humanism; and it was in this circle that, as an effect of the *Augenspiegel* controversy, the idea of the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* was conceived, and by a member of it that the first volume of the satire was composed.

By a member of Mutian's circle, we said, but not by Mutian himself. Although he afterwards had no goodwill to spare for the Reformation, his sympathetic interest in the Renaissance never changed; and he may very probably have highly approved of at least the earlier of the *Epistolæ*. He may even have suggested some of the sallies contained in them; but he was the last man to have put pen to paper as a literary satirist. Indeed, he cordially disliked communicating his wisdom or learning except by word of mouth; Socrates, he said, had never left aught in writing behind him; and, in truth, what is the written word as compared with the spoken, which goes straight from mind to mind and from heart to heart?

It was at one time thought that the *Epistolæ* were the composition of several members or correspondents of Mutian's circle at Erfurt; but there is no antecedent probability in such an assumption, and not a tittle of evidence in its favour. Kampschulte, who first effectively demonstrated the connexion between the *Epistolæ* and the Erfurters, was also the first to show clearly that Crotus Rubianus and Ulrich von Hutten were principally concerned in the authorship of the work as a whole; but he could not shake off the impression that there was some further collaboration. Böcking, Strauss, Geiger and Krause (the biographer of Eobanus Hessus) worked on this hypothesis, without advancing beyond the conclusion that the inventor of the satire was Crotus, who had the chief hand in the earlier series of letters, while Hutten was chief author of the later. As Mr Stokes reminds us, the general conclusions of these writers had been anticipated, with remarkable insight, by Sir William Hamilton; and they are accepted by Sir John Sandys in his standard work<sup>1</sup>. It was, however, rightly felt by Brecht, to whose treatise we have already referred, that the external evidence on the subject is insufficient of itself to warrant an absolute conclusion. He has therefore, with it, subjected the internal evidence, especially that of style, to a most careful examination, and may be said to have established, beyond all reasonable doubt, that the two series are internally distinct from one another, and that, of the two, Crotus and Hutten must respectively be regarded as the authors. Buschius (Hermann von dem Busch)

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Classical Scholarship*, vol. II. p. 257.



may have contributed an occasional letter<sup>1</sup>, in which case he was probably the third person of the three, which Erasmus had heard was the number of the authors of the *Epistolæ*; but it is more likely that he only contributed material. Of the collaboration of Eobanus Hessus there is neither proof nor probability. That of Aperbachius (Petrejus Eberbach) is a really baseless conjecture of Kampschulte's; while the notion that Count Hermann von Neuenahr and the Cologne Humanist Joannes Cæsarius were contributors has been exploded.

To Crotus Rubianus, then, who composed, actually or virtually, the whole of the First Series of the *Epistolæ* (the volume published, at the latest, early in 1516, before the issue of the final papal mandate<sup>2</sup>), the famous satire owed, not only its first blush (an erubescence *a non erubescendo*) of fame, but also its literary framework

<sup>1</sup> Böcking was fain to ascribe to Buschius i. 19, where enquiry is made of Ortuinus Gratius whether he did not write the beautiful elegy on Magister Sotphi (Gerhard von Zutphen), of which Stephanus Calvastrius (Baldhead?) gives a kind of parody—*nequiter immutatum*, says the indignant "poet" in his *Lamentationes Obscurorum Virorum*, where he quotes the original. Buschius, who was now a hostile rival of Gratius at Cologne, must have had an early knowledge of the poem; but this, as Brecht says, does not prove him to have written the parody, though he may have maliciously sent it on to Crotus. Another letter, in which Böcking suspected the cooperation of Buschius, is i. 36 (a gross mock defence of Pfefferkorn and his wife), which is dated from Bonn (Verona Agrippina), contains an actual reference to Buschius, and was probably based on a letter from him. Indeed, this and other *Epistolæ* contain certain parallel passages to his letter to Reuchlin in the *Epistolæ Clarorum Virorum*. See Brecht, pp. 145 ff.

<sup>2</sup> As to the "Appendex" to vol. I. see below.

and general design. Crotus Rubianus (Johann Jäger von Dornheim, whose Latin appellation is a delightful Humanistic puzzle) seems to have been one of those genial spirits who are born to keep alive the gaiety of clubs, universities or nations. His contemporary, Justus Menius, if it was he who wrote the letter which, so far as we know, first ascribed to Crotus the authorship of the *Epistolæ*, reminds him that he never allowed the troubles of the times, the decay of the State, or the degeneracy of the Church, to spoil his sleep, appetite or good-humour. He accordingly proposed that his "satires and dialogues" should be sent forth into the world without his name; and, as may be seen from the chapter devoted to them by Brecht, their authorship is, accordingly, a subject of contention. It was only to his *Apologia* of his patron, Albert of Prussia (1531), that he put his name; and, after this had called forth the aforesaid anonymous letter, he seems to have published nothing more. On his return from Prussia he accepted a canonry at Halle, and died (at a date unknown) in communion with the Church of Rome—whether in perfect sympathy with her, who shall say?

But much water had flowed down both the Weser and the Pregel before Crotus had been purged of the ferment which had agitated both him and men of sterner stuff, in the days when the German Reformation was still undeclared. One of the earliest of his writings (or of the writings ascribed to him with much probability), *Contra Sentimentum Parrhisiense* (late in 1514?), deals satirically with the Paris opinion on the *Augenspiegel*<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> In it there figures the "Cursor (bachelor lecturer) in Theologia," Hackinetus Petitus—the Dominican Guillaume Haquinet Petit—

Nothing was more natural than that to the satiric genius of Crotus the idea should have occurred of a contribution to the conflict in the shape of an exposure of the company kept by Reuchlin's leading adversaries, the friends and disciples of Ortuinus Gratius, the recreant Humanist who had recently put himself forward as the champion of the persecuting party.

In addition to previous efforts, Gratius had, in 1514, published a work against the *Augenspiegel*, proceeding from *Prenotamenta* to a review of the whole controversy; and he had, in addition, "latinised" divers pieces "composed" in German by Pfefferkorn<sup>2</sup>. To Gratius all the letters but two in vol. I of the *Epistolæ* are addressed. Curiously enough, it seems to have been made almost certain by Brecht that this volume was put into shape by Crotus, not at Erfurt but at Fulda, where he was in 1515 still teaching at the once famous Abbey school, in which monks and boys intending to become monks were instructed; nor is there any proof that, in this or in the following year, he paid any prolonged visit to the Thuringian University. Of course, he always regarded himself as a member of it, and of its humanistic *sodalitas*; but the immediate models of the Obscure Men were not only the *Magisternosters* and Bachelors of Erfurt or other Universities, but the monks of Fulda

who figured as a kind of Public Orator already under Lewis XII and was afterwards Confessor of Francis I. He was an active promoter of the agitation against Reuchlin's book, and is addressed by Lyra Buntschuhmacherius, one of the Obscure (i. 35), as "Guillelmus Hackinetus."

<sup>2</sup> The Latin version of the *Beschyrmung* (1516), which was so elaborate as to make it almost a new book, was also ascribed to him.



whom, for his sins, he had to teach Latin. These brethren must have represented a class which might well look up with hopeless admiration to the Latinity, in prose and verse, of "the poet of the Cologne Theologians." Nor can they but have included celibatarians of a type likewise too prominent among his supposed correspondents.

As for the origin of the title of the book, it is explained with great gusto in the first letter of vol. II, no doubt written by Hutten. It is for humility's sake (we are there told) that Grätius, the supposed receiver and publisher of the letters, adopted a title for the collection ironically indicating the real superiority of his correspondents to Reuchlin's *Clari Viri* (see above, p. 99). As we read in the twentieth of Ecclesiasticus, "there is an abasement because of glory, and there is that lifteth up his head from a low estate." The title of the satire and the notion of addressing the letters to Grätius need no further explanation; but the note of burlesque was struck at once in the names of his correspondents. Böcking's attempts to explain these names and to identify them here and there with known personages are certainly more suggestive than conclusive; but, to whatever extent they were intended to mystify, not even Rabelais or Dickens was superior as an onomatopœist to the inventor of the series headed by "Thomas Langschneyderius *baccalaureus theologiæ formatus*<sup>1</sup>." Some (like those of Nicolaus Caprimulgius or Matthæus Mellilambus) may be translated straight into English;

<sup>1</sup> A degree implying the completion of the prescribed course of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, and, according to Dr Rashdall, quoted by Mr Stokes, still surviving in the University of Coimbra.

others only through the model of German idiom (like Paulus Daubengiglius (Deafmute), Conradus Dollenkopfius (Noodlehead), Lyra Buntschuhmacherius (General-Strike-caller); yet others remain more or less doubtful, but still pleasing (like Franciscus Genselinus or Gerhardus Schirruglius); while of one or two the derivation had better be left untraced.

Such being the names of the writers, what is the *materia* of their discourse? *Non omnibus una, Nec diversa tamen*, as befits those who are brothers in density, ignorance and grossness. Magister Langschneyderius, in the celebrated opening letter of the volume, asks for the solution of a problem put forward at an academic banquet at Leipzig—where the conversation was washed down by copious draughts of wine from Elbe and Rhine, and beer of Eimbeck and other taps—whether *magister nostrandus* or *noster magistrandus* is the correct expression for a person eligible for the degree of Doctor in Divinity (called by usage *Magister noster*). Magister Joannes Pellifex propounds the theological question whether capping a couple of Jews, mistaken for *magistri nostri*, was a *peccatum mortale* or *veniale*. But, though the letters now and then return to questions of academical etiquette or quasi-theological discussion, like the Rabelaisian difficulty (i. 37) which is finally left to be settled by Mrs Pfefferkorn, their topics soon become more familiar and the treatment of them looser; and gradually the references to Reuchlin and his affairs and adversaries (which begin with a query about *iste ribaldus*) become more noticeable. At the same time, Ortuinus Gratius is worried with wicked ingenuity (in

the persistency of which there is more humour than in the details), and occasionally with brutal coarseness, about his supposed evil living and putative bastard birth. For the rest, the writers take every occasion of exhibiting their notions of scholarship as well as of religion and morality; and their random talk comically illustrates the tendency still in vogue to harmonise pagan myths with Biblical passages, and to elucidate Christian dogmas by means of forced analogies and false etymologies<sup>1</sup>. More simple is the warning that too much reading of poetry must lead to carnal thoughts<sup>2</sup>.

Now, throughout the letters comprised in vol. 1, the Reuchlin controversy is constantly in the mind of the author; and to his puppets it is a red rag ceaselessly exciting them to imbecile anger and impotent spite. But it is clear that their inventor is interested in them on their own account as the creatures of his humour. In this humour there is at times no burlesque at all, only a comic insight resembling that of Cervantes or Smollett, rather than that of Rabelais or Scarron<sup>3</sup>. Far different

<sup>1</sup> See i. 28, 30 and 38.

<sup>2</sup> i. 23.

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, the inimitable letter from Joannes Lucibularius of Zwolle (i. 20) applying to Ortuinus Gratius for a testimonial, which is so well translated by Mr Stokes that we cannot resist quoting it at length:

*"Joannes Lucibularius to Magister Ortuinus Gratius.*

Greetings that no man can number.

Reverend Herr Magister, inasmuch as you formerly promised me that you would be my help in time of need, and that you would fain advance me before all others; and inasmuch as you told me boldly to seek your aid, and that you would then stretch out a helping hand to me as to a brother, and would not desert me in adversity—I therefore



is the spirit found in possession of the machinery of the *Epistolæ*, so soon as the fiery personality of Hutten reveals itself under the mask of the Obscure Ones. It may be traced, without much uncertainty, in the very first of the seven letters forming the "Appendix" to the third edition of vol. I, published in the latter part of 1516, several months after the issue of the mandate *de supersedendo*. In the latter part of August, Hutten had received at Bologna from Crotus a copy of the first or second edition of the first volume; and this, which we know he had not seen before, and which he now acknowledged as *quam non illiberales jocos*, suggested to him the continuation of a satire previously unknown to him, though of course he might have heard of its being in preparation. Hutten, whose genius was

now entreat you, for the love of God, to succour me, as you are well able.

The Rector here hath dismissed an assistant teacher, and desireth to appoint another—will you therefore on my behalf write a letter of recommendation, praying him to be pleased, or to deign, to appoint me? I have no more money, since I have spent it all, for I have even bought me some books and some shoes.

You are well aware that, by God's grace, I am competent; for when you were at Deventer I was in the second class, and I afterwards stayed in residence at Cologne for a year, so that I qualified for the Bachelor's degree, and I should have graduated at Michaelmas if I had had the money. I know how to expound the Boys' Exercise-book to learners, and the *Opus Minus* (Part II), and I know the art of Scansion as you taught it me, and Peter of Spain in all his works, and the *Parvulus* of Natural Philosophy. I am a singer too, and am skilled in plain-song and prick-song, and I have a bass voice withal, and can sing one note below contra C.

I call these things to your mind in no vainglorious spirit; pardon me, therefore—and so I commend you to God Almighty."

essentially receptive rather than original, threw himself with passionate zest into the self-imposed task of continuing the *Epistolæ*, and, after furnishing forth the "Appendix" to vol. I, at once set to work on the letters comprised in vol. II, which was published, at the latest, early in 1517; for there can be no doubt that it was included in the Apostolic Brief issued against the *Epistolæ* on March 15 of that year.

Ulrich von Hutten had at this period not yet reached the height of his stormy career. Erfurt had been one of the Universities which he had visited without settling there, after he had, in defiance of the wish of the Franconian knight his father, shaken off the dust of the monastic school at Fulda. Crotus was not yet teaching there; but, about 1506, the scholar-errant made friends with him at Erfurt, as well as with Eobanus Hessus, Aperbachius, and, so far as a radical difference of temperament permitted, with Mutianus himself. His early adventures, and the writings in part connected with them, by which he won himself a place among the Humanists, must not occupy us here: but it should be noted that, so early as 1514, he gave expression to the interest which he took in the Reuchlin controversy by a poem entitled *Triumphus Capnonis*, which Erasmus advised him not to publish while the matter was still *coram iudice*<sup>1</sup>. A second visit to Italy in 1515-17 (the date of his first had been 1512-13) heightened his

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated *Triumphus Doctoris Reuchlini*, actually published in 1517 (or '18) with an illustrative woodcut based on Dürer's *Triumph of Maximilian*, though, notwithstanding Strauss, it would seem to have been the work of Hutten, who calls it *Triumphus Capnonis*, was probably a different poem.

Humanistic sympathies and antipathies; and, in the preface to a revised edition of his *Oṽtis* (a satiric treatment of the theme "Nobody is everybody"), which he prepared during or just before his stay at Rome, he opens his heart about the theologians of the day, their stupid pride in their cowls and privileges, and their hatred of all good and Christian work, like that of Erasmus and Reuchlin. At Bologna, where, to please his father, he settled down to read law, he found time to learn Greek, and with his tutor read Lucian, an author whose example inspired him to the long series of dialogues in which he clothed his hatreds and his aspirations<sup>1</sup>.

Enough has been said to account for Hutten's resolution of sending forth a Second Series of *Epistolæ*. The "Appendex" to the first volume and the body of the second bear the too familiar marks of a continuation. The general machinery of the work and the general characteristics of the Obscure Letter-writers are accepted as a matter of course, and, since Hutten was not endowed with much inventive power, often become wearisome in his hands. As a sort of play within a play, he gives a quasi-concrete illustration of his model in the *Epistolæ Magistrorum Lipsiensium*, of which he furnishes a complete specimen full of boasting and bestiality<sup>2</sup>. Brecht has been at great pains to show how Hutten repeated the various devices of his predecessor

<sup>1</sup> The earliest of these *Phalarismus* (against Ulrich of Württemberg), which appeared in March 1517, was probably composed much about the same time as was his share of the *Epistolæ*.

<sup>2</sup> i. 43, 44. The enclosure contains the famous students' bill of fare: *Semper* (Grütze), *Continue* (soup), *Cottidie* (porridge), *Frequenter* (boiled meat), *Numquam* (cheese), etc.



—the imbecile problems<sup>1</sup>, the praises of *Magister-nosters* and monks, the bad morals and the bad verse of Ortuinus Gratius<sup>2</sup>. To the second-class man in quest of a testimonial in vol. I corresponds the aspirant to a fat country living in vol. II (48). Furthermore, Hutten follows Crotus in the names he invents for his letter-writers, though he occasionally introduces among them a real personage, such as Arnoldus de Thungaris and the blatant Jacobus de Altplatea himself, and in the openings and general arrangement of the letters. Verse is, however, more plentiful in part II; and in the splendid rumble of Magister Schlauraff's perambulation of Germany—a sort of Humanist *Drunken Barnabee's Journal*—critics have justly recognised the pearl of the whole collection<sup>3</sup>. Its authorship has been, grotesquely enough, ascribed to Melanchthon; but Hutten knew why he wrote

*Et ivi ad Gripswaldiam<sup>4</sup>,  
Quæ habet modicam companiam,*

<sup>1</sup> Whether a man can be a member of more Universities than one, and should not rather be called "members" of them (ii. 13); whether proper nouns can have plurals (ii. 47); whether it is a mortal sin to eat a chicken in an egg on a Friday (ii. 26).

<sup>2</sup> One picture of him (ii. 52) as he sits among his books, whisk in hand, is almost a replica of the woodcut prefixed to the first section of *The Ship of Fools* ("Of inprofytable bokes"). As to University matters, see especially ii. 58, where the decline of the German Universities, both in number of students and in the value of degrees, is lamented. This very amusing letter calls for an ampler commentary than can be attempted here.

<sup>3</sup> Schlauraff's itinerary presents rhythmical as well as other analogies to the *Schlauraffenschiff* in Brant's poems, which is mentioned in the former.

<sup>4</sup> It was on his journey from Greifswald that he fell into an ambushade.

*Et sic abivi mox,  
 Quamvis fuit statim nox,  
 Et veni ad Francfordiam,  
 Quæ jacet apud Oderam;  
 Ubi Hermannus Trebellius<sup>1</sup>  
 Cum suis poematibus  
 Multum me infamavit,  
 Et audacter blasphemavit;*

nor could he keep himself bodily out of this masterpiece:

. . . . .  
*Tunc ivi ad Franconiam,  
 Ubi est fluvius Menus.  
 Ibi Ulirichus Huttenus  
 Juravit levatis digitis  
 Quod vellet me percutere virgis,  
 Si vellem ibi stare;  
 Tunc cogitavi meum salutare.*

In the later series the device of suggesting praise and blame indirectly—out of the mouth, as it were, of the enemy—is worked with far more intentness than in the earlier. While Crotus's treatment of Reuchlin and his case was more or less subsidiary to the main purpose of ridiculing the obscure partisans of his adversaries, Hutten has primarily at heart the commendation of the great scholar and the pillorying of those adversaries, and repeatedly reviews the Humanists united against them as a sort of *conjunctio* in favour of the good cause<sup>2</sup>. Writing as he does near Rome, whence, as will be remembered, the papal mandate had now issued, he eagerly seized an opportunity, not likely to recur, of having his full say upon it. Hochstraten and Pfeffer-

<sup>1</sup> Hutten's tutor.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. i. App.; ii. 9.

korn are "roasted"—it is difficult to find a politer word equally appropriate—without mercy<sup>1</sup>; on the other hand, references to Reuchlin multiply as we proceed, and in the middle of the volume, he is introduced *in propria persona*<sup>2</sup>. Spectacles on nose, the good old man satisfies the curiosity of an inquisitive *baccalaureus*, who has found him in his study reading a book "in strange characters," "called Plutarch," while under his chair lay the everlasting Pfefferkorn's *Defensio*. Would he not answer it? "By no means" (he replies); "I am already vindicated. I pay no further heed to such folly, when my eyes scarcely suffice me for studying matters of use to me." Elsewhere (ii. 50), he is spoken of as "That poor old man...who in all his life hath ravaged no one; that is, he hath accused no one falsely, nor has he attacked the life or reputation of any man by word or deed."

Like master, like followers. One of the Letters deplores the discredit into which the old school has fallen, except at Cologne; it is now opposed by such men, forsooth, as Doctor Reyss of Würzburg<sup>3</sup>, who altogether holdeth a way of his own, and is neither an Albertist, nor a Scotist, nor an Occamist, nor a Thomist. And if one

<sup>1</sup> The former is made to communicate himself the *epitaphia* made on him at Rome (i. App. 48), and described as now in the depths (ii. 6). Pfefferkorn's *Defensio* is again and again riddled; and (ii. 28) is an anthology of heretical and treasonable passages, by no means altogether burlesque in intention, culled out of the book by a Reuchlinist.

<sup>2</sup> ii. 34.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 43. Joannes Reyss was an Erfurt graduate and a Canon of Würzburg, and was called by more friendly critics "a second Augustine and Cicero."



asketh him, "Most excellent Herr Doctor, of what way are you?" he answereth, "The way of Christ."

If this noble passage be more or less of a plagiarism from St Paul, the writer of vol. II has in his mind, from first to last, a living student possessed of that intellectual independence which is the writer's ideal.

Nothing is more curious than the determination with which the great name of Erasmus is, in vol. II of the *Epistolæ*, as it were, forced upon the attention of the reader<sup>1</sup>. As a matter of fact, Erasmus, who had been highly amused by one or two samples of the *Epistolæ* while they were still unpublished, was any-

<sup>1</sup> Already in the "Appendex" to vol. I (42) he is brought on the scene, and the writer expresses his conviction of the impossibility *quod unus homo parvus, ut ipse est, tam multa deberet scire*. In another letter (48) he is said by Hochstraten to have already begun to write on theology, and is warned to take care of himself if in his scribblings is to be found the very smallest jot on which he has gone astray, "or which I do not understand." In vol. II the desire of claiming him as a supporter of Reuchlin becomes very obvious. In Letter 33 occurs the wellknown and rather burlesque jest of coupling with Reuchlin "another fellow, Proverbia Erasmi." In 38 he is reported, from Basel, to be, with Glareanus, in Reuchlin's favour; but in 59, where the whole "conspiracy" of poets upholding Reuchlin is reported, and Murner and Buschius, and Wilibald "something or other" (Pirkheimer), and Hermann von Neuenahr and Croke and Hutten—why should he leave himself out?—with Vadianus and Wimpheling and Melancthon and some of the Erfurters, are enumerated among them, Erasmus is, after a fashion, excepted. But the fashion is artful in the highest degree, for no greater compliment could have been paid him than the famous phrase *Erasmus est homo pro se* (Mr Stokes translates "Erasmus taketh his own part"; we should prefer "stands for himself"). Yet though the phrase is, so to speak, softened by the assurance that he will never befriend those theologers and friars, it was probably intended to convey a shade of reproach.

thing but pleased by the work as a whole, or by the part which, in the continuation, he was made to play; and, in a letter to Cæsarius, he expressed his opinion that this kind of thing could only do harm to the cause of Humanism. *Non tali auxilio*; and we must remember to what weapons—those of ribaldry and calumny—Hutten had followed Crotus in descending. Moreover, Erasmus, who was admitted to the intimacy—at least by letter—of the great ones of the earth, and whose diplomacy had been called upon to exert itself in the affair of Reuchlin itself, could not relish the freedom with which some of the Letters in vol. II dealt with the intentions of the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of France. For the local colour which Hutten, as a resident in central Italy, contrives to impart to the Letters (a large proportion of which are dated from Rome, and introduce such topics as the Pope's elephant, the *Campo Fiore*, and the unbearable heat of the summer) is not more noticeable than the interest shown in the great personages and great questions of contemporary politics—an interest of which Crotus, with his far narrower horizon, gives little or no indication.

We have no space left in which to discuss the theory, to which we do not attach much importance, that the last eight Letters of vol. II are the production of a different writer, who is conjectured to have been an Alsatian pupil of Wimpheling<sup>1</sup>. These Letters first

<sup>1</sup> Of course, it is not impossible, as Brecht points out, that in the body of the Letters in vol. II Hutten was occasionally indebted to the suggestions of his friends Jakob Fuchs and Friedrich Fischer, Canons of Würzburg, with whom he lived at Bologna. (See above as to ii. 43.)

appeared in the second edition, published in 1517, and were possibly intended as a reply to the Papal Brief condemning the whole work. Some of them are dated from Strassburg or its vicinity; and, as Strauss observes, they suggest a desire to give the censors of the work a place in the pillory by the side of the detractors of Reuchlin. There is no other element of novelty in them; and neither the powerful indirect indictment of monks as pretenders to religion but leaders of evil lives (ii. 64), nor the scandalous imposture of providing Ortuinus with a magical formula in writing invisible to all persons born in wedlock<sup>1</sup>, is out of keeping with the earlier Letters. The last Letter of all (for the Third Part that followed was altogether spurious), in which Magister Maleolus (Hämmerlein) in *Paradiso* tells the whole truth "without flowers of rhetoric" to Ortuinus and in round terms assigns him and his crew to the gallows, is sheer invective, without any attempt at fun, except what may lurk in the not very intelligible colophon. We have it on the authority of Erasmus that, until this Letter appeared in print, many monks still believed the *Epistolæ* in general to be the genuine productions of real men.

In what precedes, an attempt has been made to furnish the reader with an outline of the story of this celebrated satire and, incidentally, to convey some notion of the manner and style of the two series of which it consists. Notwithstanding all its repetitions, its scurrilities, and its ruthless use or invention of personal scandal, the production remains in its way

<sup>1</sup> ii. 65. This, so far as we have observed, is the only reference to magic in the *Epistolæ*, except the obscure suggestion i. 41.



unique. The idea of advocating the cause of the Humanists, and of the intellectual freedom represented and defended by them, out of the mouths of their sworn adversaries was wholly original; and the design, which grew out of this idea, of representing those adversaries as hopeless and despicable dullards, was achieved, with little, indeed, of the playful irony of Erasmus, or of the luxuriant expansiveness of Rabelais—but it was achieved. The cap fitted; and, though as a literary performance the *Epistolæ* cannot rank with the greatest satires of the world's literature, yet not only was their success immediate and overwhelming, but, produced as they were in one of the critical epochs of the history of modern civilisation, they rank higher than the *Satyre Ménippée* or *Hudibras*, in proportion as the cosmopolitan importance of their theme transcended the merely national importance of these later satires.

If, after the exchange of a few more amenities, the curtain fell somewhat suddenly on the play, this was due, not so much to a satiety which could not but eventually set in, as to the march of events, and to the completeness with which the interest of Germany, and in a less degree that of other Western States, were absorbed by the religious struggle, the outbreak of which is rightly dated in the year 1517. Not only the Obscure Men were obliged to take up a more or less definite position towards the Reformation. Of Mutianus and Crotus we have already spoken, and the attitude of Erasmus we know. Reuchlin, when he resided in the house of Eck at Ingolstadt, prevented his host from burning Luther's books; but he was out of sympathy with Luther, and ceased from intimate intercourse with

his own kinsman Melanchthon. Hutten dared to choose the opposite part. But the Humanist movement was for a long time overwhelmed by the religious; and to Luther the *Epistolæ* seemed sheer foolery. Much of the satire, as we have seen, hardly deserves a different name. But the impulses which gave it life and importance, though they could not prevail in a period of Confessions and Formulas, were but arrested, and might safely await a revival of their day.

## 5. INTRODUCTION TO *THE SPIDER AND THE FLIE*

(*The Spenser Society's Publications*, 1894.)

THE Council of the Spenser Society has allotted to me a task, of which the rather depressing nature will, I trust, in some measure excuse the wholly inadequate performance. In truth, but for two special circumstances I should have shrunk from coming forward, in the character of the last and the least worthy of the Society's Presidents, to introduce the volume which is to conclude the series of its *Publications*<sup>1</sup>. The very first, however, of these *Publications* consisted of a reprint, from the original edition of 1562 (with which was collated the second edition of 1566), of John Heywood's *Proverbs and Epigrams*; and an Introductory notice in this volume, besides announcing that a MS. Glossary—since unfortunately lost—had been prepared, held out the prospect that the Society might ultimately place the *complete* works of John Heywood in the hands of its members. This was at the hopeful date of 1867; and when, many years afterwards, I first became connected with the Spenser Society, I conceived the ambition of carrying out a scheme which abler hands than mine had not found the opportunity of accomplishing. Before, however, in my own case the requisite leisure had offered itself, the abhorred shears were

<sup>1</sup> *The Spider and the Flie*. By John Heywood. Reprinted from the edition of 1556. Printed for the Spenser Society (Manchester) 1894.



preparing to cut short the Spenser Society's own existence; and I was glad to be allowed to associate myself with its farewell volume, the issue of which will, we may hope, at least contribute to keep green the fame of a writer entitled to a place of his own among the worthies of our literature.

John Heywood (the meagre records of whose personal career I have elsewhere<sup>1</sup> endeavoured to summarise and do not propose here to reexamine), after he came up to town from Oxford, led the life of a wit. But a wit in those days was not, as such, promoted to be a Master in Chancery or a Commissioner of Wine Licences; and the greater number of our author's days were accordingly spent, more or less professionally, in the devising of entertainment—or should I say entertainments?—for the Court and for the houses of the great nobles. Wits and artists are not as a rule implacable partisans; and thus it came to pass that, although “at the Duke of Northumberland's board, merry John Heywood was allowed to sit at the table's end,” he devoted himself, ever since he had (probably by Sir Thomas More) been recommended to the favour of King Henry VIII, with special zeal to the service of the Princess Mary, and clung to it in evil times as well as in good—from the troubled season of her early womanhood to the loneliness of her deathbed. It was to these services, in which the efforts of the minstrel or jester were blended with more or less conscious literary endeavour, that the compositions owe their origin for which, as is but right and just, Heywood is chiefly remembered. Although he was by no means the in-

<sup>1</sup> *The Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. xxvi (1891).

ventor of the species known by the name of *interludes*, and although his own pieces so designated vary widely among themselves as to the degree in which they approach the dramatic form proper, yet he "marked an epoch in the history of the drama<sup>1</sup>."

But it would, most certainly, have been impossible for him to take part as he did in the emancipation of our early Drama from the swaddling-clothes with which it had been contented through so prolonged an infancy, had it not been for his possessing, in no ordinary degree, the literary gift of flexibility. If this Protean quality be thought proper to the jester, it is, at all events, accompanied in Heywood by a touch of that melancholy pathos which, like more than one jester of other times, he is not loth to reveal<sup>2</sup>. (I have elsewhere confessed that I fail to recognise in the portrait of Heywood which appears in so many of the cuts illustrating *The Spider and the Flie* the expression of sadness discerned in it by sympathetic eyes.) Leaving, however, aside sustained efforts of pathos like the *Ballad of the Green Willow*, it is only necessary to turn over the *Proverbs and Epigrams* themselves, in order to become aware of the varied aspects of mind and character which reflect themselves in Heywood's literary work. As for the *Proverbs*<sup>3</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> See the interesting passage concerning Heywood in the (post-humous) second volume of ten Brink's *Geschichte der englischen Litteratur* (1893).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. No. 100 of *The fift hundred of Epigrammes* ("Of Heywood").

<sup>3</sup> Mr Julian Sharman's edition of these, from the impression of 1546, with notes and general introduction (London, 1874), is well known.

nothing could be more cumbrous than the inductive machinery to which the author resorts in order to impart the semblance of coherence to the aphoristic philosophy which he is desirous of discharging; although, at the close, this machinery is, if I may so say, "wound up" with no inconsiderable skill. But in the *Epigrams* we are freed from all this paraphernalia, and are served, on "a thin, trim trencher," with a light, palatable, and here and there pungent, "banquet." If nothing else from their author's hand were preserved, these *Epigrams* would suffice to show that he was endowed with a measure of wit and humour such as—and this I take to be the root of the matter—no difference of times or manners can altogether obscure; and, moreover, that there was in him a vein of sentiment occasionally approaching poetical power. The former of these propositions will, of course, be contested by those who decline to acknowledge as decidedly droll what cannot be proclaimed as warranted to shake "both our sides"; while the further assertion is more largely based upon subjective impression, and must therefore stand for what it is worth<sup>1</sup>. At any rate, these *Epigrams* prove Heywood to have been an adept in that effective combination of vigour and lightness of touch which is characteristic of true comic genius: he is free from the pedantry which besets the efforts of many more amply endowed humourists, and knows that his proper engine

<sup>1</sup> I will hazard a single instance of the kind to which I refer (*Epigrammes vpon Prouerbes*, 51):

"Of weeping.

Better children weepe than olde men, say wyse men.  
But olde men weepe when children laugh—now and then."



for shooting folly as it flies, or vice as it creeps along, is a cross-bow rather than a catapult. "This write I," he says in the *Preface* to his *Prouerbes*,

Not to teache, but to touche ; for why,  
Men know this as well or better than I.

It forms no part of my present purpose to suggest how this kind of genius was preeminently fitted to accomplish for the development of the national comic drama an advance of the importance of which (especially as modesty was unmistakably among his qualities<sup>1</sup>) we may fairly suppose John Heywood to have remained unaware. That his *Interludes* owed something to French examples may be readily granted ; but if he borrowed, it was, after Chaucer's fashion, with so light and free a hand that the first producer himself could not have begrudged the transfer. More especially, those three of his *Interludes* (or four, if the pleasing but less broadly humorous *Play of the Weather* be included), in which the step from dialogue to dramatic sketch may be said to have been fairly taken, display a genuine power of characterisation within the inevitable limits of a farcical framework, and—within the same limits—a flow of style hitherto unknown to our drama. Beneath jest and laughter, which he spares to neither sex and pours out with equal heartiness upon clerical and upon lay objects of his satire, lie the foundations of a solid good sense,

- <sup>1</sup> " Were I, in portraiying persons dead or alive,  
As cunnyng and as quicke to touche them at full,  
As in that feate I am ignorant and dull."

*Dialogue of Prouerbes*, etc., Part I, Cap. 7.

And in the lines *To the Reader* concluding the *Epigrammes vpon Prouerbes* he terms himself, *simpliciter*, "the woorst writer."

which, as a matter of course, coincide with the principles of a healthy morality. But the superstructure is light and agreeable; for in his *Interludes*, as in his *Proverbs* and *Epigrams*, he is so little of a pedant that he does not even profess to be an instructor.

Now, in literary as in other biography, paradoxes are "against kind"; and, if our natural feeling revolts against historical portraits in which virtuous princes or other heroes suddenly become at a particular point in their lives monsters of turpitude and corruption, so our critical instinct should be on its guard against too readily accepting literary verdicts of an analogous centaur-like import. John Heywood, whose vivacity, humour, and sound sense in the works already mentioned have been generally recognised by literary historians, is, with almost the same consensus of judgment, declared by them to have written one of the dullest works in our language—to wit, the allegory in verse which is here presented to the members of the Spenser Society. No doubt, at the outset, this one caveat should be lodged against any such judgment: that nothing is easier than to denounce as unreadable a work which you have never read. And I hope, before concluding this brief *Introduction*, to offer one or two considerations tending to show that some at least of the critics of *The Spider and the Flie* have spoken without their book. The mere length of the poem is nothing to the purpose, if the character of the subject and the style are not, in themselves, inadequate to such fulness of treatment. "Who now reads" through the very *Faerie Queene*, of which the existing fragment has been calculated to be as long as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* together, with the *Æneid*

thrown in; so that Hallam was induced to question "whether it is a source of regret that Spenser did not complete his original design?" Nor, although the attempt might not be inappropriate in connexion with a publication of this Society, can I undertake to discuss the reasons which have antiquated the allegorical form of poetic composition itself, unless in the rare instance of its use where it is pervaded and animated by high imaginative genius<sup>1</sup>. Heywood's "largest and most laboured performance" is condemned not because of its length, or because it is an allegory, but because, to quote Warton's words<sup>2</sup>, "perhaps there never was so dull, so tedious, and trifling an apologue; without fancy, meaning, or moral....Our author seems to have intended a fable on the burlesque construction; but we know not when he would be serious and when witty." He goes on to quote with approval the judgment of Harrison, the author of the *Description of Britaine* prefixed to Holinshed's *Chronicle*, who says that in his book of *The Spider and the Flie* Heywood "dealeth so profoundlie, and beyond all measure of skill, that neither he himselfe that made it, neither anie one that readeth it, can reach unto the meaning thereof."

These censures are, in the notes to the edition of Warton now before me, supported by the dictum of Ellis, in his *Historical Sketch of English Poetry*, that this parabolic tale is "utterly contemptible," and by the

<sup>1</sup> Such an enquiry would have to meet the additional difficulty that of this form, so far as English literature is concerned, a complete comparative history still remains to be written, much as has been done towards it by W. J. Courthope.

<sup>2</sup> *History of English Poetry* (W. C. Hazlitt's edition, 1871), IV, 85 *seqq.*



following MS. note, contributed by the learned annotator of Warton, the antiquarian Thomas Park:

Herbert says: "We are to consider the author here, as he really was, a Catholic; partial in vindicating the Catholic cause and the administration by Queen Mary, whom he characterises by the maid, with her broom (the civil sword), executing the commands of her master (Christ) and her mistress (holy church). By the *flies* are to be understood the Catholics, and by the *spiders* the Protestants. How justly the characters are supported I have neither leisure nor inclination to examine."

Now, leaving aside for the moment the question of literary treatment and style, I venture to point out that, before a critic puts on the black cap, it is only fair that he should enquire into the meaning and purpose of the work which he may afterwards feel constrained to condemn. Neither Warton nor his authority Harrison appears to have taken the trouble to do this, the former rushing off at once into purely literary criticism, and the latter, like Ellis after him, contemptuously throwing up the game. Herbert—I presume the bibliographer, William Herbert—seems, like a schoolboy reading a tale, to have gone so far as to turn over one or two of the chapters towards the end of the poem, and more especially the "*Conclusion with an exposition of the Auctor touching one peece of the latter part of this parable.*" Had he bestowed a rather closer attention upon even so much as the heading just quoted, he could hardly have failed to notice that the explanation which he has thought sufficient for the whole applies only to a part of the poem; and had he read the "*Conclusion*" itself with ordinary care, he would have perceived his statement as to the poem at large, that "by the *flies* are to be understood the Catholics, and by the *spiders* the

Protestants," to be, if not absolutely incorrect, at least practically misleading.

I desire, then, to ask the particular attention of the reader to the first few lines of the *Conclusion* in question, where a clue is offered, by pursuing which, in however tentative and imperfect a fashion, something like an insight into the "plat" or plan of Heywood's work will, I think, be without difficulty obtained:

I haue, good readers, this parable here pende,  
After olde beginning newly brought to ende.  
The thing, yeres mo then twentie since it begoon;  
To the thing, yeres mo then ninetene, nothing doon.  
The frewte was greene; I durst not gather it than,  
For feare of rotting before riping began.  
The losse, it on the frewterer's hande lying,  
Had, in that mistery, mard his occupying.  
This worke among my poore workes thus hath it past:  
Begon with the first, and ended with the last.

In other words, *The Spider and the Flie*, which was actually printed in 1556, was begun in 1536, but laid aside in the following year. Whether or not the "definitive" version of the poem was actually completed in the year of its publication, it cannot have received its finishing touches much before that date<sup>1</sup>. It was not

<sup>1</sup> The poem contains, so far as I know, no incidental internal evidence as to the date of its composition. In Cap. 36, an aged fly delivers himself of the following autobiographical statement:

"I am a fly

Of suche age as spiders few or none can boste  
My father's hand writing for witnes haue I,  
That I was bred in the yere of the great froste  
Before the great sweat; when many flies were croste  
Out of the book of lyfe, who of extreme colde  
Were frozen to death, midaged, yonge and olde."

till 1555 that the submission of England to Rome—*alias*, the “reconciliation” of England with Rome—for which Queen Mary had laboured since her accession in 1553, was actually achieved; nor till 1554 that her marriage with Philip, of which Heywood speaks as an accomplished fact, was concluded. Wyatt’s rebellion, which led directly to a series of executions (including that of Lady Jane Grey and her husband) that may be regarded as supplementary to the execution of the Duke of Northumberland and two of his followers in August, 1553, had been suppressed in February, 1554. The death on the scaffold of the Duke of Northumberland, the head of the Protestant plot against the succession of Mary, is unmistakably referred to in the crushing of the Head Spider under the foot of the Maid:

And as vnder that mayde spider dide but one,  
So vnder this maide, save one (in effect) none;

a passage which, were it not for the allusion to the royal marriage, might suggest the conclusion that it was

The learning of my friend Mr James Tait\*, enables me indeed, to state that this must have been either in 1506 or in 1517, in both of which years there was, according to Hecker, a visitation of the Sweating Sickness. Though as a rule these visitations were preceded by rainy winters, in January, 1506, a great frost occurred, during which the Thames was frozen over (*Chronicle of the Greyfriars of London*, Camden Society’s Publications, 1852, p. 28); and a similar frost, with the same result, took place in January, 1517 (*Wriothesley’s Chronicle*, *ib.*, vol. 1, 1875, p. 10). (This was, by the way, about a year after the birth of the Princess Mary.) But, even if we knew to which of these two sequences of frost and epidemic the veteran alludes, this would not carry us much further.

\* Now President of the Chetham Society, Manchester, and Professor Emeritus of the University.



actually written between the execution of Northumberland and the supplementary executions, as I have called them, which ensued a few months later.

But, however this may be, it evidently behoves us, if desirous of understanding the conception or design of the poem as a whole, to do what so far as I am aware not one of the commentators upon it have condescended to do, viz., go back to "years more than twenty" from the date of its publication—the year 1556. Now, the year 1536 was a most memorable year in English history—that of the popular rising provoked by the proceedings of Henry VIII against the smaller monasteries, and known by the designation, given to it by the insurgents themselves, of the *Pilgrimage of Grace*. This insurrection, which undoubtedly was essentially religious in its character, overbore all attempts to quell it; nor was it until the following year that the King found himself in a position to break his promises to the insurgents, and take vengeance upon their leaders<sup>1</sup>. A strict adherence to the evidence of dates would imply that Heywood began his allegory of *The Spider and the Flie* under the impression made upon him by the accounts which had reached him of this singular insurrection. The *Pilgrimage of Grace* was, in the words of a distinguished English historian<sup>2</sup>, an attempt of "the masses, who could

<sup>1</sup> It is a curious fact, which, however, has no bearing upon the argument, that "in 1558, five days before Queen Mary's death, there was granted to" [Heywood], "under the description of 'John Heywood, gentleman,' the manor of Bulmer in Yorkshire, lately the property of Sir John Bulmer, who had become attainted for his complicity in the *Pilgrimage of Grace*."—See J. Sharman, *u.s.*, *Introduction*, p. xlv.

<sup>2</sup> Mr S. R. Gardiner.

neither read nor write," to take into their hands the redress of grievances, both actual and imaginary. From these events and transactions, then, the mind of Heywood, who at this very time (1537) is known to have been in personal attendance at the Court, and upon the Princess Mary in particular<sup>1</sup>, must have derived the first suggestion (whatever modifications it may have afterwards undergone) of

Such a flight of flies in scattred ray  
As shadowed the Sonne, from thearth to the skie.  
No kind of flie a liue, but was there that day,  
Tag and rag, like lions; raging now rage they.  
Flesh flies, butterflies, land flies, water flies,  
Bees, humblebees, waspes, hornets, gnats of all sies<sup>2</sup>.

Now, I do not so much as insinuate that "the graund Captaine standing amid mong this rout" was first intended to be Robert Aske, or that the "copweb" fort manned by the spiders was originally meant for Skipton Castle, which alone in Yorkshire held out for the Crown, or that any other incidents of the insurrection may have suggested the Hector and Andromache scene (with a difference<sup>3</sup>) which furnishes a natural domestic incident in the poem. These are conjectures of detail which it is manifestly easier to hazard than to verify. But I think that there can be no doubt as to the starting-point of Heywood's allegory; and, considering the first issue of the Rebellion, I further think that a very natural explanation presents itself, why, "nineteen years" before 1556, in the year 1537, when the successful

<sup>1</sup> See Sir F. Madden's *Privy Purse Expenses of the Princess Mary* (1831), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. 67. For an earlier family scene see cap. 5.

Roman Catholic insurrection was being avenged in detail by the King, his servant should have postponed the design of treating a movement with which he was in accord, while he could not profess to regret its defeat, as the theme of an elaborate literary composition.

I say "postponed"; but we know how in an imaginative brain a theme dwells, and modifies itself, and matures. Heywood lived on, as a courtier in his degree, through the remainder of the troublous reign of Henry VIII; and, though his sympathies at least remained stedfastly true to the old form of faith, he had to conform, with what grace he could, to the harsh exigences of the new. When the young Edward VI came to the Throne, he is said to have continued to hold in favour his elder sister's attached follower of whose "opinions" perhaps no notice was taken alongside of his "conceits" or jests, since we have even seen him allowed a place at the board of the Duke of Northumberland (the Earl of Warwick of the earlier years of the Protestant reign). That reign had not long endured, before another insurrection occurred in the south-west, which resembled the Pilgrimage of Grace both in its intensity and in the general nature of the griefs which cried aloud in it. But the rising that shortly afterwards, in the same year, 1649, broke out in Norfolk, was certainly due to civil and social, rather than to religious, discontent. Mr Froude<sup>1</sup> has well described the sentiments which agitated the multitude that organised itself into "Ket's rebellion." It was, he says,

A feeling of burning indignation at the non-English conduct of the gentlemen. The peasant, whose pigs, and cow, and

<sup>1</sup> *History of England*, etc., ch. xxvi.



poultry had been sold or had died, because the commons were gone where they had fed—the yeoman dispossessed of his farm—the farm servant out of employ, because where ten ploughs had turned the soil one shepherd now watched the grazing of the flocks—the artisan smarting under the famine prices which the change of culture had brought with it:—all these were united in suffering; while the gentlemen were doubling, trebling, quadrupling their incomes with their sheep farms, and adorning their houses with splendour hitherto unknown.

Without recalling other names or incidents belonging to the strange and interesting history of this insurrection, I merely remind the reader of the camp on Mousehold Hill, outside Norwich, where Robert Ket the Tanner established his headquarters, and where, under the Oak of Reformation, in the midst of his camp, he administered justice upon the country gentlemen brought up before him on the charge of robbing the poor. It is sufficiently obvious that this circumstance was in Heywood's mind when he causes the Ant, taken prisoner by the army of flies, "most beggarly, most bold," under their Grand Captain, to be brought by a company of them—

"hauing cast a halter about" [his] "neck,  
To their tree of reformation standing by;  
They fellie forst him, with many a chorlish check.  
A ladder to that tree was set, at a beck,  
Where he in hast halde vp; and, the halter tide,  
'Turne the theefe of the ladder,' thousands cride<sup>1</sup>."

Nor is the allegory rendered less apt by the circumstance, that in the poem the prisoner is granted a "quiet heryng" and ultimately reprieved—just as Ket, even when there was a cry to hang some obnoxious

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 53.

captive, allowed no attempt at summary punishment. It is even possible that in the treatment of the Ant, who appears as mediator, there is an allusion to the King's herald, who on July 31st made his appearance under the Oak of Reformation, and ultimately escaped unhurt.

Furthermore, special note should be taken of what has been already pointed out, viz., that the nobleman who in the end suppressed this rising was no other than the Earl of Warwick, afterwards Duke of Northumberland, the personage that, as has also been already seen, is at the close of the poem unmistakably identified with the chief enemy of the Flies, the "Head Spider," or "Spider-le-Graund<sup>1</sup>."

While religious differences doubtless largely contributed to bring about this unhappy insurrection, and to intensify and embitter the sentiments which sustained it, yet the essential character, both of this particular rising and of the whole series of popular movements which convulsed English life in Edward's reign, was that of a social agitation. On this head there is no necessity of enlarging. The late Professor Brewer, towards the close of his monumental work on the earlier half of the reign of Henry VIII<sup>2</sup>, argues that the Reformation itself may be said to have owed its origin to the rise and influence of the middle classes in England; and, without going so far as this, it is certain that the men who for better or for worse laid the foundations of

<sup>1</sup> See Cap. 60:

"At this hurlie burle, that spider le graund,  
In his cheyre fretting fewriouslie he frownith.  
His look was commission, silence to command."

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II. p. 472 *seqq.*

Elizabethan England, were the new gentry, against whom neither the old nobility nor the rustic multitude—the familiar allies of the Pilgrimage of Grace—could prevail.

This aspect of the civil strife which distracted the country from the middle of Henry VIII's reign to the middle of Elizabeth's was, I feel certain, likewise the aspect that reflected itself more especially in the general conception of Heywood's allegory. To the quarrel between Catholics and Protestants he can hardly be said, before he comes to the *Conclusion* which winds up the poem, to make any allusion either direct or indirect, except in passages which may fairly be described as purely incidental in character. In the *Preface* he has recourse to an elaborate inductive device, constructed after the fashion of the scheme or plot which holds together his handbook of Proverbial Philosophy, in order to show that the matter is not so simple as it may seem of

Scanning who is the spider, who the flie.

This would have been an unnecessarily audacious assertion, had he intended the simple solution adopted by his commentators. As the narrative progresses from its pleasant, quasi-Chaucerian opening through what must be allowed to be its least interesting portion—for I am prepared to grant that the first two dozen or so chapters of the poem are anything but light reading—no reference to the religious question intervenes in the long-drawn series of arguments between the captive fly and his jailor, for which Scholastic philosophy and legal quibbling alternately supply the materials. Nor (as may be worth mentioning) is the argument concerning the definition of freewill, incidentally introduced



into this wrangle, concerned with the new shades of significance imported by the theological disputes of the Reformation into a question of far greyer growth. Readers of Chaucer will remember a much more striking—if, perhaps, in effect equally unsatisfactory—appeal to a time-honoured statement of a perennial problem<sup>1</sup>.

After the action of the poem has been quickened by its issue being allowed to include that question of “conscience” or, as one might say, feeling, which philosophers and lawyers are bound to ignore<sup>2</sup>—and after two arbitrators have been appointed to reduce the quarrel to simpler terms, there is still no attempt to explain the allegory as representing a conflict between forms of religious faith. In a quite subsidiary (though, no doubt, rather enjoyable) episode where a “tart taunting spider” and a “sharpe saucy fly,” stand forth to “chop logike” with one another “in rude reasoning of this case,” and to prove the two sides in it that have been asserting the equality of their “honestie” equally *dishonest*, the “quareling spider,” it will be noticed, launches at the “cockyng flie” (and not *vice-versa*) the chance charge:

I durst ley my life, thou art an hereticke.

Whereupon, to be sure, the fly retorts:

I defie...the wretch that so seith!

Harke, I will euin in your eare confesse my feith<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See *Troilus and Creseide*, Bk iv., ll. 957 *seqq.*

<sup>2</sup> “Lawe and custome those twaine of thy laide three  
(Namely lawe) somewhat resoned here haue byn.  
But of conscience (saue that name namde we)

No word was touchte, since we did firste begin.” Cap. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. 44.

But I merely instance this inversion of the supposed religious significance of the allegory, in order to insist upon its more important general bearing, which, in the same chapter of the poem, is most emphatically brought out. If the reader will be at the pains of perusing the whole of this chapter, he will perceive the substance of the conflict to lie between the "spiders letting farms, and flies holding farms"; between the

Flies looking like lams; spiders like lyons looke;  
As though poore flies were made for rich spiders all;  
Of which, though foolish flies the suffrance may brooke,  
Wise flies cannot brooke it; for thei finde in booke  
This demaund written: "When Adam dolve and Eve span,  
Who was in those golden daies a gentleman?"

None as who saie. And were there none now (say wee),  
The worlde shuld be as good now, as it was then.

If yemen flies were put in autoritee,  
We wold rule as well as spiders gentlemen.  
Shall Jak sauce now rule flie? Sir, by these bones ten,  
We shall sure be rulde, in all kinds of lawse,  
As well by Jak sause as by maister John dawse.

And, earlier in the same chapter, the fly asserts that the real idolatry, of which he and his fellows are guilty, is that of bowing down to spiders:

For we, therin, woorship false imagery.

It is perhaps needless to add, that, of all prejudices, the last with which Heywood, in this or in any other of his works can be charged, is that of superstitious reverence for the clerical Order as such<sup>1</sup>.

Here, then, in the very heart of the poem, its true meaning is to be divined. Its purport is a representa-

<sup>1</sup> "Sum clarks (of whom this little ant not least clark)  
Can fine lies as finely as fine true tales tell."—Cap. 58.

tion of the social conflict between an actual ascendancy of power and wealth and a "murmering muttring<sup>1</sup>"—and suffering—multitude.

This conflict the poet views, according to his kind, humorously—in other words, from a point of view in which serious purpose and sympathetic sentiment by no means exclude satire. But, although he occasionally allows his anti-democratic tendencies to find expression in the form of an epigram<sup>2</sup>, his treatment of the problem of reconciling the conflicting interests of the few and the many is, on the whole, serious and well-balanced. Comparatively early in the course of the poem, he indicates the solution of the problem—a strong monarchy—which the personality and action of the Maid (Queen Mary) exemplify at its close. A very well-sustained argument on forms of government, conducted at this stage between the spider and the fly, in which it has been satisfactorily shown that there are defects in every form, suggests the conclusion, that as tyranny is the worst of all, so the rule of the true King is the best. But between oligarchy and democracy the scales are fairly enough held—just as it is shown with much truth that in the giving of "verdict and judgment," "one wily

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 51.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Cap. 22:

"No diff'rence in othe, the worthe of a pease,  
Betwene a thowsond flyes and a thousande fleas."

Or, more laboriously, Cap. 39:

"Put case, a duke of estate honorable  
Affirming a tale on his honour for trew,  
A duck stepth foorth, and saith it is a fable:—  
Were it not a case, trow you, as strange as new,  
That dewke and that duck of one credite to vew?"



learned spider," as judge, may be not less unjust than may be "twelve unlearned blunt flies as jurymen<sup>1</sup>." So again, when in a later *passus* the Ant, appointed as one of the arbiters in the dispute, strives to conduct it on an equitable basis, the argument as to the relative credit due to gentlemen and yeomen—"worship," with its derived or indirect contributories, being compared with square "honesty,"—is carried on fairly as well as ingeniously<sup>2</sup>. The writer is quite awake to the advantage attaching, in a civil conflict, to order as against numbers<sup>3</sup>; and, which is of more importance, he understands the real feebleness of the action of crowds, each component member of which trusts to his escaping individual responsibility<sup>4</sup>. Finally, the poet is so far from regarding with cynical indifference the issue of the social conflict which he illustrates, that, in a truly Solonian spirit, he reserves his profoundest contempt for the political—or shall we say social—indifference, which, in order to secure personal immunity from the consequences of choosing a side, prefers to wait on Providence, and to be "in" with the ultimate majority<sup>5</sup>. I shall not be

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. 38.

<sup>3</sup> See Cap. 52.

<sup>4</sup> "And though they gesse, that manie of them shall die,  
Yet, if ech one think sure that scape he shall,  
As I think, all so think assewredlie." Cap. 59.

<sup>5</sup> "These indiffrentes (or newters) that part most take,  
That strongest is, or strongest like to be;  
And, which side they leane to, such nombre they make,  
That they beare the bell awaie, and most apt we se  
To cleaue to the ill part, enuie of properte:  
Which properte proueth, in sortes last or furst,  
That of all sortes this last saide sort is wurst." Cap. 63.

accounted a Philistine for saying, that the expression of such a sentiment by a hanger-on of the Tudor monarchy furnishes a comfortable proof that the political spirit of Englishmen is unquenchable.

I have endeavoured to show, however imperfectly, what is the nature of the essential—or, to put it plainly, the moral—interest attaching to this underrated, and indeed contemned, poem; and I am disposed to think this interest the reverse of common or mean. The literary merits, on the other hand, which may be claimed for *The Spider and the Flie*, are, perhaps, of no very high order, although—in my judgment, at least—the reverse of despicable. The process of the action of the poem, and the not unskilfully contrived sequence of its successive parts, are sufficiently displayed in the *Table* prefixed to it by its author. They exhibit, as it appears to me, a lucidity by no means common to allegorical compositions, and, after the first and all too scholastic portion of the argument has been exhausted, a very notable variety of treatment. Nay, even episodes are introduced with some expenditure of skill. The appointment of the arbiters (the Ant and the Butterfly) almost amounts to the provision of a play within the play; and, indeed, the Ant's oration conveys the moral of the poem as it were *in nuce*<sup>1</sup>. But the dialogues between the two flies who in the midst of the turmoil assert the right of individual criticism is episodical proper, and one of the most freshly conceived passages in the poem<sup>2</sup>. I have already referred to this, as well

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 57. The Ant's speech in this chapter is not unworthy of Menenius Agrippa.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. 63; cf. Cap. 58.

as to the incidental introduction of the motive of domestic pathos, which, together with the similar incidental narrative passages summing up the immediate results of the campaign<sup>1</sup>, might possibly, unlike any other part of the allegory, be held to imply something of burlesque intention.

As for the style of the work in general, its prosaic colouring may be readily allowed; and I dare say that some critics may account this concession a sufficient justification for throwing aside a composition in verse in which there is so little that can be called poetical. But *non cuivis contingit*. Heywood belonged to an epoch of literary productivity in which poetic "distinction" was not accounted the sole criterion of effective verse. His syntax has the, more or less, involved character peculiar to that of all—or nearly all—the English writers of his age, and, except where genius exerts its illuminating power, of so many even in the greater age which succeeded it. His style is, at the same time, sufficiently differentiated from that of other writers, whether or not of his own generation, by features proper to himself. On the one hand, a certain cautiousness of intellectual temperament, in conjunction with a desire to find expression for varying ways of thought and moods of mind, leads him to indulge excessively in parenthesis; and (as it is, I think, alike unnecessary and inexpedient to show by examples) the effect of his style suffers accordingly. By way of compensation, he is, as might be expected, very fond of quoting proverbs; and even the earlier, and less lively, half of the poem is thus

<sup>1</sup> Capp. 5, 66–68; Cap. 70.



preserved from unrelieved dulness<sup>1</sup>. But this familiarity with the close-packed diction of the people enables him to enliven his own very considerably by touches reproducing its inimitably terse phraseology, and to present us with a bright garnish of epithets and expletives, which, in modern phrase, we could "ill afford to lose<sup>2</sup>."

The versification—including the metrification—of this poem, in fine, must be judged by some more competent authority. To my ear, the cadence of its stanzas, though no doubt laboured and with no pretension to elegance, is anything but unpleasant, and has a certain characteristic sobriety or "sadness" which well suits the theme. It is marked, moreover, by an abundant use of alliteration, which adds an appropriate archaic flavour, and aptly reminds us of the onomatopœic dexterity of the author of the *Interludes*. Indeed, among the *dramatis personæ* of this allegory itself we meet with such effective double-barrelled appellations as "An-

<sup>1</sup> "Thornes pricke yonge" (Cap. 5).

"For woulde I neuer so willingly will

To weare powles steeple for a turkey hat" (Cap. 15).

"Trew men in at doores, theeues in at windowes" (Cap. 21).

And, later in the poem:

"Most prowde, most foole as flies prouerbes conceiue" (Cap. 44).

"So manie heds, so many witts" (Cap. 55).

"Mark this mark:

Th'old prouerbe sayth: 'Manie hands make light wark'" (Cap. 56).

<sup>2</sup> "Hucker mucker" (Cap. 6).

"Not worth an inion" (Cap. 23).

"Costerde-monger" (Cap. 30).

"Rake-hels" (Cap. 44).

"Tag and rag" (Cap. 52).

"Mermaides, thone halfe flesh, thother fishe" (Cap. 63).

thony Ant" and "Bartilmew (Bartholomew) Butterfly," the arbiters chosen by the spiders and the flies respectively to settle their contention<sup>1</sup>; and, all through the poem, alliteration is abundantly employed to emphasise metre and meaning<sup>2</sup>.

I must now leave it to the reader to decide for himself, whether he agrees with me, that, in the poem here reprinted, Heywood, who like every author of original power has a style of his own, is true to its essential characteristics. Such effort as is demanded for reading *The Spider and the Flie* from cover to cover, seems to me, even apart from the interest attaching to the matter and to the historical significance of the work, more than counterbalanced by the enjoyment derivable from the author's manner. This manner is, as a whole, both grave and sustained; but there lurks in it an animating irony, while, in many passages of the book, it is diversified by vivacious sallies of satirical humour, and by aptly introduced *gnomæ* of popular mother-wit.

In conclusion, a word must be said of the woodcuts which have been with successful fidelity reproduced in the present reprint. I have already touched on the "portrait" which forms the frontispiece of the book, and which was reengraved in the 1562 edition of the *Epigrams upon Proverbs*, reprinted for the Spenser Society. The

<sup>1</sup> Cap. 28.

<sup>2</sup> So, in Cap. 2, "sodayne sorow, from setled solas;" "long liking life" and "dredfull doubtfull doutes;" and in Cap. 56, in his humorous "rude" speech to the flies, the butterfly addresses them as "a sort of capayne coblers," who "like capon cockers cock." Again, in the subtle discussion in Cap. 38, as to the difference between the regard due to *authority* and to that due to *persons in authority*, they are said to differ as far as "Ierico and Iersei in ioining iar."

author is habited in a furred gown, which has been thought to resemble a M.A. gown nearly enough to mark the wearer as an Oxford graduate; the cap on his head is, however, more like a doctor's hat or an ordinary cap than a Master's "mortar-board." In his girdle he wears a dagger, possibly (though I have doubts on this head) representing the "dagger of lath" which, as is well known, was the jester's professional emblem. In the woodcuts prefixed to the successive chapters of the poem, the progress of its action is very quaintly and ingeniously illustrated by an amusing series of variations, representing the several scenes enacted in the author's window and in the "copweb" covering its centre, while his own figure, in a succession of more or less conventional attitudes, suggests a kind of unity and proportion in the argument. About the middle of the volume, however, as the action of the poem developes, the engravings assume a larger size and take a more ambitious turn; and round the Tree of Reformation are grouped the contending hosts of the Spiders and the Flies, with their arms, and standards, and artillery. The battle-piece, to match the narrative of the flies' assault upon the spiders' castle in Cap. 66, constitutes the artist's most elaborate effort. Towards the close of the poem, we are presented with the "portrait" of the Maid who set her foot upon the spider, and

"he was forthwith gon."

In this buxom personage, at least, nobody is likely to descry an expression of melancholy; and the tragic issue of all this dolorous debate is more aptly marked by the tailpiece, with Melpomene's awful head, which appears for the last time over the word "*Finis*."



## 6. SOME ACADEMICAL EXPERIENCES OF THE GERMAN RENASCENCE

Address at The Owens College, November, 1878<sup>1</sup>

AMONG the many devices of the Renaissance age there is one consisting of two words, engraved over a scholar's door, which, though it seems to breathe the atmosphere of a world where it is always Long Vacation, I may perhaps not inappropriately quote to you today. Inscriptions, even when they are not epitaphs, must not be read all too literally; and there seems something of irony in the contrast between sentiment and experience, when one remembers the life of the man who chose for his motto—I might almost say, when one remembers the fate of the house for which the motto was chosen—*Beata tranquillitas!* Blessed is tranquillity. For, in many ways, this life was a far from tranquil one, and the house which long sheltered it was, in the end, sacked by that natural enemy of all tranquillity—a mob with a cry. And if it is most true, in the words which Landor puts into the mouth of Machiavelli, that “the sleeper is more tranquil than the wide-awake, and the dead even than he”—then the tranquillity enjoyed within the walls which bore this placid legend was something very different from the repose of night and the stillness of the tomb.

For here dwelt one of the foremost representatives in the Germany of the Renaissance and Reformation

<sup>1</sup> Address at The Owens College, Manchester, delivered at the opening of the College Session, 1878-9. Macmillan & Co. 1878.

period of a band of men whose zeal and energy helped to recast the intellectual life of their nation and age. Here was the chosen meeting-place of a company of scholars, eloquent with the part-recovered wealth of classic speech, disdainful of the formulæ and methods which had sufficed for generations of their predecessors, and ready to conspire, like Attic tyrannicides, with the weapons of their audacious invective wrapt in the ever-green of ancient lore. Here Conrad Muth—better known as Mutianus Rufus (though why Rufus, is one of the buried secrets of Renaissance nomenclature)—Canon of Gotha, the acknowledged father, and for a time the leader, of the Humanists of the University of Erfurt in Thuringia, spent much of his life among books and manuscripts—treasures brought from beyond the Alps, where in his youth he had associated with Baptista Mantuanus and Pico of Mirandola, and now, with a hospitality liberal of something more than “the frolic wine,” distributed by him among his chosen guests. Long and laboriously had he sought, and but imperfectly was he destined to enjoy, what he proclaimed a scholar’s truest blessing. After boyhood, he had passed through many years of what he calls lucubrations, exiles, peregrinations, and discomforts manifold, borne for the love of letters. Trained together with Erasmus in the famous school of Deventer, the seminary of so much that is greatest and noblest in the movement of the German Renaissance, he had, like Erasmus and a thousand others, led a wandering life, which had, however, at last brought him home to the neighbourhood of his old Thuringian University. Erfurt, of whose significance in German university

history I shall have more to say, was then in a transition stage. If the proverb still held good, according to which "he who wishes really to study goes to Erfurt," the direction of its studies themselves was beginning to change, and the times had not yet disclosed the meaning of another and more mysterious proverb—"Erforda Praga"—Erfurt is Prague. For it was Prague where Hus had taught and preached, and whence he had gone forth to trial and death.

After this, for a time, the life of Mutianus becomes more generally typical of many a scholar's experience. When a firm footing seems to have been gained, and the span of manhood's years to stretch out with the promise of a long vista of usefulness, there enter self-confidence and scorn of the pedants satisfied to tread the accustomed paths; and, in the course of time the field of congenial labour having been diligently cultivated, there is something of a harvest reaped and more of seed sown. But the reaction begins almost with the fruition; the world—even the little world around us—while it moves, to be sure, yet will not change all as the student wishes; the current of the Renaissance enters into the current of the Reformation, which he hesitates, and then declines, to join; the younger men and their aspirations begin to outrun the desires of those who set their highest hopes upon a future which others than they are to control; till, at last, come the beginnings of repose, at the cost of estrangement from those who are unwilling or unable to submit. And it is well if the multitude outside do not take upon itself to fret and rage against a simple and a useful life as against the superfluity of idleness, as did the Gotha mob when,



headed by fanatic preachers, it plundered the house of Mutianus, with those of his brother-Canons, in the name of that Reformation for which, askance though he looked upon its progress, he, too, had helped to prepare the way. Doubts, difficulties, and controversies—the lot of men to misunderstand and be misunderstood—all these are not shut out by the door of a student's library, any more than by the planks of a ship or the portals of a palace; it is only in neatly constructed allegories that such a seclusion really secludes.

And yet the motto of Mutianus has a very real meaning, which may come home to us with special force as we on this morning in our College also stand upon a threshold—the threshold of a new period of academical study. The tranquillity to which our typical Renaissance scholar looked forward, and which in some degree it was his to enjoy, was not the tranquillity of isolation—such as some men no doubt have sought in colleges, as well as in retreats sacred to religious meditation alone. What he sought and in some measure found was the satisfaction of accomplishing, partly *with* others, partly *through* others, his share of the intellectual task he saw opening before his age. There is perhaps no class of men in reviewing whose lives and labours we have the connectedness and continuity of all effective human effort more hopefully brought home to us than the class to which scholars and men of science belong; and it is but natural to seek in the records and reminiscences of institutions where such men have worked together under common conditions, and often with common ends, for evidence of the strength which lies in union. Nothing, says Mutianus, is more beneficial to the scholar

than literary companionship; and such companionship—whether between teachers or learners, or in mingled mutuality—is of the very essence of academical life. Our modesty will prevent us from applying too specifically the words of another and greater student, the very flower of the Reformation in its academical aspect, whose title of *præceptor Germaniæ* fails to measure the range of his influence. “There are,” says Melancthon, “no more pleasant and no firmer friendships than philosophic friendships. I mean those of scholars contracted in the companionship of studies. Not even the friendship of Lælius and Scipio would have been so sweet had they been strangers to the Muses.” We may deem it to savour of over-legislation when in several of the old college statutes at Oxford and Cambridge we find such injunctions included as this: “That the fellows who are willing to walk out should seek each other’s society, and walk together, conversing with each other in pairs on scholarship or on some proper and pleasant topic, and so return betimes.” But, though the gentle pressure intimated in the one case may not invariably have produced the results extolled in the other, it seems to be not far from a truism that a common academical life is the very nurse and foster-mother of individual intellectual effort. Assuredly, even in those directions in which the pursuit of academical studies has preeminently pointed, great things have been accomplished by what is called self-help, if you like to give it that vague name. Erasmus himself indulged in the vanity of calling himself an *autodidact*; and few of us are strangers to challenges pointed by such remarks as this, that Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall* is not

due to Oxford, or Grote's *Greece* to any university. Other voices have been heard to proclaim the incontrovertible fact that the achievements of genius are primarily ascribable to no methods of training, whether academical or other. *Quis negavit?* Who, even without examining how far even in such cases academical training may have indirectly contributed its influence, is inclined to deny the extraordinary and exceptional phenomena of mental power, energy, and endurance? But who, on the other hand, that knows the uncertainty and the unrest of solitary study, that has watched the process by which a band of fellow-workers becomes (to call it by the old name) a *school* of learning and research, can doubt the beneficent influence of means which, in one form or another, no epoch of civilisation has been able to forego? The Renaissance age was in its way singularly alive to the uses of associated study; and if I may speak of different times, I may say in passing that there is no side of modern university life better worth not only preserving, but developing, than that of combination in study. Between teachers and learners the laboratory and the seminary, among learners their own associations connected with the studies of their academical life, are the real and necessary supplements of the lecture-room.

But, in whatever way and under whatever circumstances he may carry on his labours, the tranquillity of the atmosphere in which the student is to feel at home will primarily depend on the end which he proposes to himself in them. For, of course, the real tranquilliser of the mind is the sense of freedom, and it is this sense with which every true scholar, every true man of science,



every true votary of the *liberal* arts, is privileged to become endowed. Not to be gained at once, or gained without toil, yet it is denied to none who are patient and true, and who, however gladly they may welcome the accidents of recognised success, perhaps of fame, refuse to see even in these the ends of their lives and labours as students. Just as a well-organised system of university education should carefully lead from a common basis of sound general training to the several main branches of study, and in these, again, leave room for the closer pursuit of special lines of research, so the student who aims at *much* will, without closing his eyes to the connexion of studies, eschew discursiveness so far as possible in the conduct of his own, until at last he has suited them to the tastes and talents with which he is gifted and which his opportunities have enabled him to cultivate. When he has ascertained and tried these—a time which comes sooner to some, later, but not the less surely, to others, and which it should be the object of every well-devised academical system to include among its possibilities—then, under whatever conditions it may be his lot to prosecute his task, he may work on to the end in tranquillity. For that freedom will be his which belongs to harmony between the work and the worker; and whether, ere his day closes, he has gathered in, or but sown, or merely turned the sod, it is he of whom the poet's words are true, that "time is his inheritance, and time the field he tills."

It does not however escape me that to some of my hearers such views may seem to soar inconveniently out of distance from certain landmarks in the ordinary course of a student's life, which perhaps even those of

you who are today beginning yours may not feel inclined to regard with absolute tranquillity of spirit. The scholar whose device I borrowed was not himself dumb on the subject of the value of academical degrees; indeed, it so happens that two sayings of his are preserved which represent the two extremes of opinion on the matter. In his inmost soul, Mutianus cherished that lofty contempt for mere "brands" with which it is difficult altogether to disavow a certain sympathy; in fact, he anticipated the friendly counsel which was, I remember, not long ago offered to the authorities of our own College, recommending them to set the example of a university unembarrassed by such meaningless, or at all events fluid distinctions as B.A., M.A., or D.D. "Where Reason presides," he remarked with much truth, "there no Doctors are requisite." But he was, at the same time, shrewdly alive to the possibility that (in the eyes of an unreasoning public) it would be a considerable advantage for his friends, the men of the new era, to bear the accustomed brand. "I should strongly advise you," he writes, under a more worldly impulse, to his friend Urbanus, "to obtain the title of Master of Arts, in order that under this mask *terreas infantes in tenebris*—you may awe the babes in the dark." Perhaps the superstitious reverence for mere academical titles has not altogether vanished even in a different age and nation, although there are discriminating eyes enough wide open to use the light of publicity around them. But, in any case, it would be worse than idle to attempt to illustrate existing systems of university graduation—such as those of our own country at the present day—by any historical pseudo-analogies.

Opinions may differ as to what an academical degree should imply—whether the mere passing of an examination-test of knowledge acquired and digested, of power trained and matured, even of actual work accomplished—or, besides this, a fixed period of residence at a recognised place of academical education, in which latter case it will additionally indicate the certainty that its recipient has undergone, and the probability that he has benefited by, the influences which, as I have said, are of the very essence of academical life. Opinions may differ as to the relations in which examination should stand to teaching, whether the latter should practically be depressed into dependent preparation for the former, or whether examination should be an accompaniment and test of education, to the regulation of which the conductors of that education should themselves have something to say. But there can be only one opinion as to the principle that, when a degree implies the passing of an examination-test (and of those which signify *less* than this I think it unnecessary to speak), then the nature and conditions of that test should be (as they are in all our national universities) open to public ken and criticism; and the administering of that test should, where public policy deems it desirable (as, in fact, it has in the case of some of our universities) be partly in hands of persons directly responsible to the State. In these circumstances, and under this double guarantee, any national university which should attempt to lower the existing level of degrees, or to trifle with the proper bestowal of its own, would condemn itself with an openness irreconcilable with the dictates of ordinary prudence—to say nothing of ordinary public spirit.



From the student's point of view only a word need be added. So long as he is possessed by the mere sense that he is gradually compassing the *quantum sufficit* for any degree or other examination, by the mere consciousness that he is acquiring the power—which men *acquire*, but with which machines are born—of “turning out” a certain amount of results, he has not yet crossed the inner threshold. The old academical term of *honours*—distinctions which, as you know, do not follow a man's name through life like the B.A. and the M.A., which it would be worth the Postmaster-General's while to prohibit on the outside of letters—this term itself implies that only he who does more than suffices is entitled to regard; and though it is the name of the Senior Wrangler only which used to go forth to the world at the midnight hour, yet any effort which strives for more than is necessary is the work of a true student's spirit. Still nobler is the stimulus which impels him to work on for the sake of the work itself, and for the gratitude, nameless though it be, of all those whom the progress of knowledge benefits. Our degree-lists will not suffer if such are the motives of our exertions;—and so, though the medieval custom has become unfamiliar to most modern Colleges, according to which older and younger, masters, bachelors, and scholars, dignified and undignified, sat in common on the students' benches, we may all have our share in the tranquillity which is alike removed from stagnation and from unrest.

The motto of Mutianus seemed to me naturally to suggest a few reflexions which have only repeated part of what, in one shape or another, must be in the minds

of many of us on an occasion like the present. I had met with it in the course of some readings in a chapter of university and general educational history, which has long appeared to me to possess special interest and significance. And this, not only, because the particular chapter I have in view belongs to the history of a nation whose academical life has been of signally great importance for its progress and destinies, and to the history of an age among the most prominent features of which the reform of existing and the foundation of new universities hold a conspicuous place. Nothing is at once easier and more delusive than to find half-resemblances between the tendencies and conditions of different ages and nations, and I have always thought the drawing of so-called historical parallels between ages, as between individual personages in them, a peculiarly precarious kind of intellectual exercise. The statesman, though he both uses and values the experience of the past, has to deal not only with the needs but with the forces of the present; and whatever plans or schemes, for instance, those who are interested in questions of university policy in this country may have in view, it is the conditions of our own age and nation by which their issue will and must be determined. But it cannot be idle for those who like ourselves live in a land of intellectual activity, nowhere more marked than in educational life and in the growing demands made upon its means and opportunities, to note some of the elements in the educational efforts of a kindred people at a period when it was signally awakened to this branch of its national duties, and to ask ourselves whether in any of them we can recognise factors *indispensable* to all

true progress in this momentous direction of national activity.

Without drawing any comparisons of which lack of time would prevent me from stating the grounds, I think it incontestable that nowhere in that wonderful age which stands midway between two great divisions of history, and shares so many of the characteristics of both, was the movement we call the Renaissance in the great majority of its phases at once so arduous and so serious, so elevated in the scope and so broadly popular in the range of its endeavours, as in Germany. Much—in some respects singularly much—had to be done there; and not the least in the enlarging and extending of the opportunities of academical study and training which Germany had been late among the nations of the West in offering to her sons. Of them, too, some of the most illustrious in learning and in letters had sat on the benches or filled the chairs of the greatest of the medieval universities, the University of Paris; whose long-enduring attractiveness to Germans is attested by a list full of illustrious names, from Albertus Magnus downwards, including a poet such as Walther von der Vogelweide, a preacher such as Geiler von Kaisersberg, with not a few of the men whom we Protestants are apt rather uncèremoniously to claim as precursors of the Reformation, and not altogether ending even with the two eyes of Germany, Erasmus and Reuchlin. But, though undoubtedly Paris had, as at all times, owed something of her power of attracting foreigners to the foreigners themselves, no German rival had, like our English Oxford, at any time wrested from that University the leadership in philosophic thought and teaching



The remoteness of the seats of the earliest Universities in the Empire (Prague had been founded in 1347, and Vienna in 1365) must in any case have prevented them from becoming real rivals to the great place of learning in the West. Even after Universities had begun to be established on or near the Rhine (Heidelberg, 1386; Cologne two years later), and further inland (Erfurt, 1392; Leipzig, in consequence of the emigration of the German students and professors from Prague, 1409; Rostock a northern colony of Erfurt, 1419), the so-called "German nation" first makes its appearance as one of the great divisions of the University of Paris, and after the English wars the name supersedes that of the "English nation" there. But the academical ascendancy of Paris declined and fell with the progress of the struggle against the dominion of the scholastic theology and philosophy of which she had been the great exponent and representative; while the policy of the Popes was willing enough to let her suffer for the prominent part she had played in upholding the supremacy of the General Councils. Thus continued the decentralisation (if I may rather loosely call it so) of university education which, both in and outside France, the 15th and 16th centuries were to carry to so extraordinary a length. It was in the midst, and largely with the aid, of these changes that Germany entered into the full current of her share in the Renaissance movement. In the latter half of the 15th century, and the first few years of the 16th, not less than nine new German universities were added to the seven already in existence. Pomeranian Greifswalde (1456) takes the lead; in 1460 followed the famous foundation of Pope

Pius II, assuredly one of the most intelligent and politic of all the Roman Pontiffs, the University of Basel. The terms of its foundation, indeed, remain to exemplify that power of appealing to the popular, one might almost say to the democratic, spirit which in its happiest hours the Papacy has so well understood how to wield. But universities are not bulwarks against the movements of history, though Popes may build them up; and one cannot help thinking of another Pope, honest of purpose as he was humble of spirit (Adrian VI), requesting, a few generations later, the glory of Basel, Erasmus himself, to defend the cause of the Church, and of the cold reception given to the professorially voluble counsel. In the same year (1460) was founded the University of Freiburg, one of the twin creations of a noble-minded woman, Mechthildis, Archduchess of Austria, who induced her husband to establish this University, as she afterwards induced her son, Duke Eberhard of Württemberg, to establish the University of Tübingen—the Lady Margaret of German university history. Of Freiburg, too, as of Basel, we can hardly think without remembering Erasmus, who, in this “most delectable seat of the Muses,” was to spend the much-honoured, though not untroubled, evening of his life. But the earlier days of the Breisgau University connect themselves, rather, with the name of a great jurist, Zasius, whose “angelical” lectures (for so, though he was a lawyer, one of his students describes them) rapidly raised its reputation. Next came—both in 1472—the Universities of Ingolstadt and Treves. Ingolstadt was always to be celebrated for its theological orthodoxy, driven in later days into trans-normal courses by the energy of the Jesuits, and in this

earlier period it boasted teachers such as Eck, generally remembered only as Luther's successful (for the future of the Church of Rome, too successful) antagonist at the Leipzig disputation, but, in fact, one of the most brilliant and, in some respects, open-minded teachers of his age. In 1477 followed Reuchlin's University of Tübingen, since the celebration of whose four-hundredth birthday the other day such a flood of academical tributes to its past has poured in upon those interested in such matters, and Mainz, whose fate it has not been to live so long. In the early years of the 16th century Wittenberg, the creation of the Elector of Saxony (1502), and Frankfort-on-the-Oder, that of the Elector of Brandenburg (1506), who had come to the conclusion that it was well for him, also, to do something for his neglected corner of the Empire, were added to the list.

Of the numbers of German students in this period we have no satisfactory statistics; but, when we hear of several of the Universities usually admitting from 300 to 400 students, of Cologne towards the close of the century numbering, at one time, about 2000, and Vienna either 5000 or 7000 students, and when we find the numbers of the teachers in liberal correspondence, we understand how large a current of the youthful life of the nation was now passing through its rapidly-increasing places of academical learning.

No mistake, I need hardly say, could be greater than to suppose that in the generality of these foundations, whether of a relatively earlier or later date, the moving spirit was one of innovation. The conservatism of academical bodies is an old topic of remark, and a hackneyed theme of satire. But though this spirit of



conservatism is, in academical as well as in other spheres of life, peculiarly prone to assume grotesque shapes, more especially when it finds itself in the extremes of recalcitrance, and the King must "to Oxford send a troop of horse," yet its real significance in each case depends upon the elements which compose it. Every one knows that, in the Middle Ages, not only were science and education almost exclusively in the hands of the clergy; but that to the Church the Universities owed much of their wealth and the highest of the privileges on which their power and influence were based. Thus, the Papal sanction had come to be held indispensable to the establishment of a new university; and in the latter half of the 15th century it was specially the policy of Rome to strengthen her hold upon academical education, where possible, by new foundations on the ancient lines. Of the seven Universities created in Germany before the year 1456 *all*, of the nine established in the ensuing half-century *all but one*, had received their charters of foundation from the Popes. (The exception, to be sure, was a momentous one—Wittenberg.) Doubtless, there was some measure of calculation in this (and the loyalty of the members of the Universities to the Church was occasionally secured in sufficiently explicit forms—thus, at Ingolstadt, a student taking his degree directly swore allegiance to St Peter, the Church of Rome, and the existing Pope his lord). The Chapters and monasteries often exerted themselves, so far as in them lay, to flood the matriculation lists of the Universities with members or dependents of their own bodies. Nearly everywhere, the theological faculty held a privileged position; nearly everywhere, the chancellorship was held by ecclesiastics,

here and there, none but such were admissible to the rectorship. And if, thus, the old studies were placed in a position of advantage against the coming rivalry of the new, the conservatism of the Universities was at the same time largely, and not in all respects beneficially, fostered by collegiate and bursarial foundations, which often proved specially unwilling to adapt themselves to the changes requisite, from time to time, in all systems of academical education.

The drawbacks involved in this historical relationship it seems to us easy enough to discern; and sympathise as we naturally may with much in the currents of Renaissance and Reformation which seemed alike at first destined to break themselves against the opposition offered by many of these Universities, we may for a moment feel inclined to ask whether it was not rather in spite of them than with their aid that these currents flowed onward. Yet we are apt to forget, not only how much was accomplished even in the earlier part of this period, although gradually; but that the Universities would not have been in harmony with the best efforts of their age and nation, had they not represented the endeavour to maintain unbroken the connexion imposed upon them by their historical origin.

I think it idle to deny that during this period, in Germany as in England, the framework of the Church was still regarded, by the consent of all who, in labouring for the intellectual, laboured at the same time for the moral progress of the people, as indispensable to the whole social edifice—just as in Germany the framework of the Empire was still, and more enthusiastically, perhaps, than ever, regarded by

patriotic minds as bound up with the greatness and welfare of the nation. It was the age in which, after the hopeful era of the great Councils had passed away, the attempt was made (and nowhere more eagerly and laboriously than in Germany) to revive the life of the Church by quickening the religious spirit of the people, and bringing all learning and education into harmony with, and to the aid of, these aspirations. Let us not refuse to recognise what all historical evidence seems to agree in attesting. Germany (I do not say alone, but more distinctly perhaps than any other country) was essaying the great experiment of a Reform of the Church from within, and her noblest minds clung with pathetic hopefulness to what seemed to them a still possible task. Wherever one turns among the representative men of the earlier period of the German Renaissance, one finds them basing their educational efforts on the same principle. It was the principle of that golden network of schools which had spread through the Empire from the first foundations of the Confraternity of the Common Life<sup>1</sup>, established by Gerard Groot in the Netherlands, to whose connexion with the greatest names of later Mysticism I need but advert. It was the principle of the life and labours of Nicolas Cusanus—Nicolas of Cues on the Moselle—whose career is one sustained endeavour in the combined causes of religious revival and educational reform, whose reorganising activity shrank not from the conception of reforming the Papal Curia itself, and whose open mind welcomed and fostered the classical studies for which he brought materials from the shores

<sup>1</sup> See Paper 2 *ante*.



of the Bosphorus, and anticipated, in part, the greatest discovery of modern Astronomical Science. Cusanus was a Prince of the Church; but the same motive is to be found pervading the efforts of men of learning and education pure and simple. One of these was Agricola, whose stainless name dignifies the long and mingled roll of the wandering scholars of this restless century, who hoped that Germany might become more Latin than Latium, and whose scholarship drew from Erasmus expressions little short of adoration. Others were Agricola's friend and pupil, Hegius, the simple schoolmaster to whom German classical scholarship may be said to owe its foundation, which he first laid by establishing it as the central subject of school training; and Wimpheling, the author of the first methodical expositions of National Education, the pride of that seminary of sound learning, Alsatian Schlettstadt. All these, whose names I choose merely as the most representative, were at one with regard to the great aim of their endeavours. But not only the names of men or of women—for the German Renaissance, too, has its heroines, like the Italian, and none of them recalls a more beautiful type of gentle culture and heroic endurance than that of Charitas Pirkheimer, the Abbess of the Clares of Nürnberg—bear testimony to this endeavour at combining new and old. Whole cities may be said to have built up their educational life on this basis of *pietas litterata*, as it was afterwards called by John Sturm of Strassburg, who, in later days, preserved not a little of this earlier character of the German Renaissance.

We know how fitful and how imperfect was the support given to this great conservative revival in the

quarter whence support in the shape of Reform would have most effectively come. We know that the ignorance and corruption which operated in a contrary direction were deep and widespread, although we need not believe every word that Erasmus says against the monks. And we understand why, at the Universities and schools, much in the old studies could not be in substance saved by engrafting upon them the new; for in educational life, too, there are periods when the physician must make room for the surgeon; and even the words of Erasmus seem to fall short of the necessities of the case when he protests of the "good" or New Learning—that "not for this purpose was it introduced into the schools to drive out the old learning, but that the latter might be pursued with more purity and method." For much in the old methods, and for many of the old teachers, the day of compromise was passing away. It was necessary that learning and education should not be separated from their connexion with, but taken out of the absolute control of, the clergy, and that the laity should learn to concern themselves with these matters, just as in the same age they were beginning to understand that the management of the poor and the conduct of charity were affairs with which, in their civic communities, they had a direct concern. And, of the old methods, much was to be thrust aside for ever. From the most elementary to the most honoured of studies, all were to be benefited by the change. Students were to forget Donatus and the *Ars Grammatica*, in order to learn Latin grammar itself (whether or not in expectation of the golden age when, in the opinion of the excellent Dean Colet, languages might be learnt without any grammar

at all); they were to compass the art of declining substantives without confounding their wits over the question whether the vocative is a case or not; and they were to read the Socratic dialogues of Plato in lieu of disputing whether, supposing Plato said, "Sortes<sup>1</sup> shall be cursed, if he has cursed me," and Sortes said, "Plato shall be cursed, if he has not cursed me"—whether in this case Plato has cursed Sortes or not. And, if classical learning was to be established as the basis of higher education, and to remain respected as such by both Protestant and Catholic teachers—till future ages were on it to find a footing from which to strive onwards: in the meanwhile, no science was to benefit more from both the method and the substance of the new studies than Theology, destined so soon again to absorb the chief part of the academical activity of the nation.

These changes, then, or rather the changes of which these are mere suggestions, the conservatism of educational life was not to prevent, and its unworthier elements—sluggishness, prejudice, force of habit—were to collapse in their endeavour permanently to prevent them. But the real service of that union between religious and educational ideas which the nobler part of the conservatism of this period had in view was this—that it prevented the whole educational system of which the Universities formed part from breaking into fragments; and that, in an age when the pursuit of knowledge was doubly seductive by the novelty and the brilliancy of the paths it opened, this pursuit was largely, if not altogether, preserved from the danger of being carried on without reference to its educational ends. German

<sup>1</sup> A scholastic abbreviation for Socrates.



Humanism, in individual cases perhaps, but never as an entire movement, lost its balance or ended in a slough of despond—yes, a slough of despond—like its Italian contemporary; and Germany may be held fortunate in that her educational life in this period was not estranged from the highest ideals of life which the age and the nation possessed. It is surely unnecessary to add that each age must reckon with its own conditions and its own means; and, of all conjunctures in the world's history surely none has been more unique than that which preceded the great disruption of the Church of the West, while of none, so far as we can discern, have the conditions more absolutely passed away.

There is a second feature in the German university life of this period which connects itself in some measure with that already adverted to. You know how cosmopolitan were the academical conditions of the Middle Ages; and even in this period, when Italy still seemed the promised land of scholarly research and culture, and when Ulrich von Hutten could taunt his countrymen with being regarded at Rome as born to be drawers of water and grooms of horses, the German Universities were largely frequented by foreign students. Thus, to take two examples from the north and the south of the Empire respectively, the University of Rostock on the Baltic shores, even after the foundation early in the last quarter of the century of the Universities of Upsala and Copenhagen, was regarded as the natural resort of Scandinavian students<sup>1</sup>. Ingolstadt (the University of

<sup>1</sup> I do not know, by the by, whether to this is to be attributed the (shall we say) self-consciousness of the Rostockians, as recorded by one of the contributors to the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, who reports

Eck and of Conrad Celtes, the first crowned "poet" among the German Humanists, who visited every German University in turn, and to whom one of the most ancient and important among them, Vienna, owed its transformation in this period) attracted to its lecture-rooms Italians and Spaniards, Frenchmen and Englishmen, Hungarians and Poles. But, notwithstanding this circumstance, and the fact that many of the universities as the creations of particular Princes (such as Heidelberg, Freiburg, Tübingen, and the electoral Universities of Wittenberg and Frankfort-on-Oder) were specially connected with special parts of the Empire—there is a broadly patriotic character in much of the academical life and labours of this age. We are accustomed to regard Humanism or Humanity as primarily identical with the cultivation of the ancient classical tongues; we readily remember the pride with which the author of the *Colloquia* proclaimed his ignorance of any modern language that could be of vulgar use to him, and the scorn with which professors and poets in general looked down upon the barbarous speech in which it was unfortunately necessary for them to talk to their households and the outer world.

Our Grekis theyr Greke so well have applyed,  
That they cannot say in Greke, rydyng by the way:  
How, hosteler, fetche my hors a botell of hay!

from that seat of learning:—*Rostockienses sunt magni inimici Parrhisiensium*, the Rostockians are great enemies of the Parisians, *quia Parrhisienses habent unum statutum*, because the Parisians have a statute, *quod non accipiunt ad facultatem suam magistros Rostockienses*, that they will not admit to their faculty at Paris, Masters of Arts of Rostock. *Et sic Rostockienses etiam non accipiunt Parrhisienses*, and so, in return, the Rostockians do not admit the Parisians.

Thus we often forget the services which the New Learning, in the hands of some of the most thoughtful, if the more modest, of its votaries, rendered to those studies from which patriotism has always drawn its directest inspirations. Among these, the study of national history was, in England less, in Germany more, immediately vitalised by, if it may not be said to have actually begun with, the Renaissance. More particularly in that fertile and noble borderland, which, whether its eyes have been turned eastward or westward has ever poured into the lap of the country to whose fortunes its own have been attached a prodigal wealth of intellectual effort—more particularly in Alsace, German history now began to be written with a special view to the training and encouragement of the young, at all times the heirs of the national future. Strassburg was not, indeed, then a university in name; it had not become such even after John Sturm had completed the organisation of its educational institutions—but it had long been a centre of the highest intellectual life of the nation, a place, if any, where the love of learning had associated itself with patriotic sentiment and inspiring religious thought. Here, where the traditions of the great Mystics had culminated in Johannes Tauler's life-long devotion to his task of raising and purifying the people; here where the "trumpet of Strassburg," the voice of the great preacher Geiler von Kaisersberg, had so long sounded in the ears of his generation; and where the grim and sober, but uncommonly real and direct, satire of Sebastian Brant—*The Ship of Fools*—had supplied the pulpit of his friend with a novel series of texts—here, together with the German tongue had come



into honour the pursuit and study of the national history.

Brant was a historian by profession and inclination; while it was Geiler who led Wimpfeling to begin the historical labours which rose to the first attempt of a Humanist to compose a general German history. Following these, in Strassburg, Johannes Sleidanus (of Schleiden in the Eifel), as the acknowledged chief and long sole authority for the history of the contemporary Reformation age, and, in the neighbouring Schlettstadt, the famous Beatus Rhenanus, a really critical and candid as well as patriotic historian, handed down across intervening generations the study in which the learning and labours of German scholarship have in later times gained some of their most enduring laurels. The study of history was no stranger to the German Universities and the Renaissance; at Tübingen, for instance, the historian Nauclerus was probably the most distinguished, certainly the most influential, among the earlier teachers there.

To Sebastian Brant (who wrote a life of the Emperor Titus with the sole object of bringing out the comparison) the reigning Emperor Maximilian was the *deliciæ generis humani*; but there is the spirit of a free citizen in his flattery. These educational influences helped to produce the national enthusiasm which pervades the political life of Germany in the reign of Maximilian—a Prince whose career and character are not above criticism, but who was as typical of national ideals to many of the best of his contemporaries and subjects as was our Queen Elizabeth, of glorious, but likewise not altogether unchequered, memory, to hers. The national spirit in question, after it had proved impossible to

unite it with the current of the Reformation, had to give way to the disintegrating consequences of the Reformation itself, which the organism of the Empire was too impotent to absorb and too rotten to withstand; and the Universities, accordingly, followed the tendencies and destinies of the particular States to which they happened to belong. It is not absolutely impossible that they might have more persistently continued to represent such national aspirations as survived, had they from the first been more frequently established in the great seats of free civic life, instead of being so largely dependent upon Princes, secular or ecclesiastical; if, for instance, the wish which arose once in the 14th and once again in the 16th century to establish a university in the Imperial city of Frankfort-on-the-Main had been carried into execution, the result must have proved a peculiarly interesting experiment. But, even so, the academical Renaissance in Germany—before the fiery days when Ulrich von Hutten sought with its aid, in the first instance, to stir the patriotic passions of the land—contributed to foster and sustain its public spirit, and thus fulfilled a function to be numbered among the most important of the indirect influences of academical life. Not only by the aid of those studies which directly concern themselves with the national past, or of those which in various ways help to make men active and useful citizens, but by helping to determine the tone and temper, so to speak, of a nation's youth, have universities in many ages and in many nations contributed to foster the public spirit which is the salt of the life of a community and of the nation. Of all philistinisms the most pitiable is that of a cultivated—often painfully cultivated—indifference

to the duties which are not the prerogative of the better trained, but which the better trained should be among the best qualified to perform. If there is one weakness which academical life should be capable of eradicating from its midst, it is the weakness of *pococuranti*, the characterlessness of whose careers has been so well described by the pleasantest of our Augustan poets:

Without love, hatred, joy, or fear,  
They led a kind of—as it were;  
Nor wish'd nor cared, nor laughed nor cried,  
And so they lived and so they died.

What I said just now as to historical learning illustrates the fact that it was not only the study of the ancient classics (whether of their form or of both form and subject) which profited from the influence of the Renaissance movement upon German academical life. The comprehensiveness of the range of university studies in this period is indeed not a feature likely to appear to the generality of modern students so noteworthy as perhaps it is; and, as a matter of course, there was about this comprehensiveness much that was merely tentative. If, however, we take an example, we may be better able to estimate the widely and multifariously reinvigorating nature of the changes often summarised under the name of Humanistic reform. The University of Vienna, whose institutions had been largely copied by the new foundations (Freiburg, for instance), had sunk into evident decay in the later years of the long and inglorious reign of the Emperor Frederick III. But with the accession of Maximilian active measures of reform began. Not only was special encouragement here given to the *realia*, as they were more



or less loosely called, viz., mathematics, astronomy, and physics; not only was the flower of the more aspiring students brought together in the curiously duplicate *collegium poëtarum et mathematicorum*—a seminary, as one might be tempted to call it, of classical and mathematical honour men; but the spirit of which Humanism was the embodiment influenced almost all the principal branches of university studies. There was no doubt, a danger lest the assiduous cultivation of the classical languages might run into a sheer devotion to form; and that generations might pipe away laborious days as Latin versifiers. But this danger was lessened by the attention simultaneously paid to the geographical and historical disciplines; and, while the Scholastic methods were banished from grammatical and philosophical instruction, a fuller sense was also awakened of the importance of physical and mathematical studies. By strengthening the study of Roman Law, Humanism here (as it afterwards did in so marked a degree in France) helped to draw closer the connexion between the university and the public life of the State, though (as some of my hearers are aware), with results of doubtful advantage for the continuity of the national life; while the advance of biological studies conferred indisputable benefit upon the labours of that Faculty which in after times was to contribute so signally to the academical reputation of Vienna—the Faculty of Medicine.

It would not be difficult, I suppose, to parallel the results of the new movement from the history of other contemporary German Universities, though nowhere can they have become more rapidly perceptible than

at Vienna. Thus, at the close of this period when, owing to the absorbing interests of the times, Controversial Theology was to occupy the best academical forces of the nation, we find Melanchthon, whose generous and widely cultivated mind refused to be absorbed by the claims of any single science, expounding his conceptions of the range of the higher studies with a truly generous breadth. He speaks, no doubt, as a theologian whose cardinal maxim it is that an unlearned theology is an Iliad of evils, and who desires that this science may be nourished by all the rest. But with how catholic a sympathy he urges the uses of grammar, of dialectics, of moral and physical science, and pleads for a philosophic study of medicine and jurisprudence! To me, almost every utterance of that generous mind seems to breathe the spirit of true piety; yet how vast a stride forward had been taken by him from earlier mediæval conceptions of the uses of learning—like that of Rhabanus Maurus, for instance, who held that “rhetoric ought to be studied in order that we may understand the figurative expressions of Holy Writ; poetry, so that we may ascertain the right rhythm of the psalms; dialectics, so that we may confute the false conclusions of heretics; arithmetic, so that we may decipher the mystic numbers of Scripture; geometry, so that we may arrive at correct conceptions of the sacred edifices; astronomy, so that we may fix aright the holidays of the Church.” Still, the comprehensiveness of a university system must always be relative; and nothing would be easier than to show how far the Renaissance age fell short even of a modest ideal in this direction, while much that it had gained was gained

only for a time. But, on the whole, the Universities of which I am speaking exhibit a cautious and rational progress in the direction of the extension of studies, if the limited range of the subjects (especially the scientific) open to their age be taken into account. It is noteworthy that the number of teachers was even in this period extremely large; and there is evidence that a great deal of power was wasted by simultaneous lecturing on the same subjects in the same university.

But far more striking, beyond doubt, than the comprehensiveness of range which I cannot, speaking relatively, regard as wholly wanting in the academical systems of this period, is the *thoroughness* of which Humanism proper set the example in its own special field. Thoroughness—the great aim of the true, the bugbear of the sham, student—the boy who wishes somehow to say his lesson, the youth who wishes somehow to pass his examination, the man who wishes somehow to make his speech or bring out his book! Melanchthon, when touching on the reprehensible want of ardour and constancy as learners of the academical youth of his day, relates how the eminent mathematician Johannes Stoefflerus was wont to say that if he could infuse the whole of the mathematics into a single draught, and brew them into a gruel of the more liquid sort, he doubted whether he should be able to induce his students to come often enough and stay long enough for him to pour the entire decoction through a funnel down their throats. The classical scholars of the Renaissance set the example of a thirst for knowledge and for culture of a particular kind, which may justly be described as a desire for thoroughness,



and which, as such, marks them as true students, and has rendered their sodality for ever memorable in the annals of Learning. Their contemptuous disregard for other men and other ways, their self-conceit and their want of measure in their admiration for their own leaders, are, on the other hand, characteristics savouring of pedantry; and it is not wonderful that, even in Germany, the movement should, during the brief period of its ascendancy, have contrived in some ways to outlive itself.

It is to the later part of the period of which I am speaking that the most typical academical representatives of this body of men belong. Reuchlin, the man of the three tongues (Latin, Greek, and Hebrew), but something besides a linguistic scholar, and his cause were to furnish them with a war-cry; Erasmus, cosmopolitan in his wanderings as in his fame, was rather their glorious distant luminary than the standard-bearer of their actual struggles for ascendancy. Of the most ardent and advanced group among the later body of Humanists, a particular German University, to which I have already referred at the outset of these observations, became the chosen home. The history of the University of Erfurt, which Kampschulte has written in a masterly monograph, centres in the endeavours of Mutianus and his disciples, as they took pride in calling themselves, to make the Thuringian seat of learning the representative seminary of the humanistic studies. Already Maternus, the leading spirit of the preceding period in the history of the University, had raised it to a prominent position among those which readily opened their doors to the New Learning, without entering into any

internecine conflict with the traditions of the old studies. Kindred spirits had been associated with him; but, already under his *régime*, the younger and less compromising adherents of the new studies, the "poets," as they loved to be called, had begun to form themselves into a distinct school or party. Under the leadership of Mutianus, this fraternity soon assumed the attitude of open hostility towards the "Sophists," as they contemptuously called their opponents, little thinking that the day was to come when they in their turn were to be decried under the same opprobriously-intended name.

They survived the troublous days of a civic revolution which annihilated half the treasures of the University, but, by specially impoverishing its endowed foundations, facilitated the placing of its life and studies on a new and wider basis. It was now, in the second decennium of the 16th century, that the fraternity of the Humanists at Erfurt gained the mastery over the studies of the place, and became the heralds and agents of the triumph which, in the opinion of the world of culture at large, Reuchlin celebrated over his persecutors. For there can be little doubt that to the Erfurt brotherhood, and more especially to one of its members (Crotus Rubianus), is to be ascribed the main authorship of the most effective production of the Renaissance spirit in its conflict with the representatives of worn-out scholasticism. The *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* in their effect surpassed even the *Encomium Morie* of Erasmus itself, among other reasons because of their superior directness; for, while in the earlier satire it is an allegorical (and not always consistent) Folly who

speaks, in the later it is the invariably consistent Fools themselves. At the same time we must not suppose that all the victims of the satire (its chief victim, for instance, Magister Ortuin Gratius, of Cologne), were actually the types as which it presents them. There is no such thing as personal justice in Hudibrastic literature; but the conflict and its provocation were typical, and so was its result.

This band of scholars included many whose names are forgotten in the history of the Renaissance; above all, Eobanus Hessus, who, after the withdrawal of Mutianus, persevered in upholding the standard they had jointly erected, but for whom, in the end, the troubles of the times proved too strong, as they did for the University which he loved, and served, and celebrated in his verse. That University, and more especially the *sodalitium Eobani*, had warmly welcomed the movement of the monk who at Erfurt itself had, as he says, taken his degree on the strength of the writings of the Anti-Roman Erfurt teacher, John of Wesel; its Theological Faculty had publicly condemned the papal bull launched against Luther; and Erfurt seemed destined to play a part in the history of the Reformation analogous to that which it had played in the history of the Renaissance. But this was not to be. The Reformation movement entered into a phase which separated Luther from his own extreme followers; throughout large parts of Germany the democratic spirit of the towns was aroused against the ruling oligarchies; the peasantry began its hopeless struggle for half-reasonable, half-impossible ends; and at the head of the clamouring multitudes, stood the preachers, as they proclaimed



themselves to be, of the pure Gospel. The alliance was at an end between academical Liberalism and religious Reform. The University of Erfurt was desolated by the troubles of the times; its famous teachers, the Humanists, were now derided as the Sophists; their lecture-rooms stood empty, their occupation was gone. But though the lives of many of them closed in dreariness and despondency, while others had fallen back into an attitude of hostility, or sought to maintain one of neutrality, towards the great religious Revolution—for it was now seen to be nothing less—yet their labours had not been in vain.

I wish that time had remained for me to attempt to sketch the activity of some of these men as scholars and teachers. As it is, I can hardly speak of even one of them, whose portrait more than one writer has essayed. Helius Eobanus Hessus, as he wrote himself with triple name, *more Romano*, taking his cognomen from his native land and his prænomen partly with the intent that there should be no doubt concerning his relations to Phœbus Apollo—was saluted by his admiring friends and by Reuchlin himself as the King of the Poets; he was the Ben Jonson of his circle in the veneration he enjoyed from it, as well as in his capacity for work and for relaxation. His robust nature enabled him to accept, without fear or faltering, the movement set on foot by Luther, and to maintain his sympathy with the bold Reformer to the last. But, as a scholar, he is especially remarkable for the *thoroughness* with which he performed the task of his life—above all by means of his masterly Latin translations—of familiarising his generation with classical literature, and bringing into

honour the art, indispensable to all closer scholarship, of classical composition. Of him Erasmus said (with perhaps less felicity than usual) that he had attained to what Cicero had failed to compass—for he wrote prose as if he had never served the Muses, and poetry as if he had never come into contact with pedestrian speech. Eobanus and his friends, instead of talking a great deal *about* the Classics and the Classical tongues, brought the ancient writers themselves and their speech home to the studies of their age; they sought to possess themselves of their materials, instead of nibbling at them here and there, each attaching himself more especially to one Classical writer as his chosen subject. Thus, although their own range was often limited, and although their worship of the outward form was perhaps carried to excess, yet they set their age the example of a scientific enthusiasm and a scholarly thoroughness to be appreciated even by those who take no joy in, or may see reason to find fault with, Eobanus' hexameters and hendecasyllables. It is not purely as Classical scholars that all the members of his band, among whom in their days of daring flitted the unquiet spirit of Ulrich von Hutten, are to be remembered; there were among them at least one famous theologian and a physician; but it is in Classical studies that they found their bond of union, and because of their proficiency in these that they may be looked upon as a School. And it is *Schools* such as this, formed among kindred spirits engaged in kindred pursuits, which constitute the *characterising* elements of particular Universities, as this School did in the great days of the University of Erfurt.

Does it seem strange, in days when the field of

academical studies has become as wide and varied as it is now—even among ourselves, and even more notably in Germany—to dwell with emphasis on the significance for academical life of the *thorough* cultivation of particular branches of study? Does it seem frivolous to point, as to a memorable example of academical effort, to the labours of men whose aims may seem to us curiously special, and whose ideals we may hold to bear no comparison with our own? Though Classical scholarship itself includes in our eyes many things which it did not and could not include in those of the Humanists of whom I have been speaking, and though Classical scholarship is but one of the many branches of academical study which it is our wish to see cultivated among and around us, yet in the thoroughness of these students, which was the result of their enthusiasm, consists the feature entitling them to our respect and challenging our imitation. A university which fails to train scholars in the wider sense of the word, to which men of science have a joint right to lay claim, or which, if they will renounce their claim to a specific title, fails to train men of science in the sense of the appellation in which linguistic and other scholars are entitled to share it, has no future of enduring influence before it. There are dead universities which have never been buried; the life of a university lies neither in its matriculation registers nor even in its degree lists; it lies in the spirit of thoroughness which it fosters and communicates to its members; it lies in the Schools of Research which it founds and sends forth. No one can say in what field a particular university may succeed in being or remaining preeminently active and influential; though circumstances will naturally lend



their aid in particular directions. Very few of the German Universities were, like Tübingen, early urged in the special direction in which they have gained their greenest laurels; and, at the present day, as you are aware, their respective preeminence in connexion with particular branches of study has been liable to frequent changes. Whether in Germany or elsewhere, it is not in the nature of things that a university should shine equally in all its departments of teaching. But the spirit which sustains effort and creates the desire for thoroughness is not the product of circumstances only or chiefly; it is one of the most natural, as it is one of the noblest, emanations of a really vigorous academical life.

The substance of these remarks, in which it had been very far from my wish to include anything with a controversial tendency, had been put on paper last month, when it so happened that my attention was attracted by an article in one of the periodical magazines, entitled *The Multiplication of Universities*. I should not, at the close of the address which may have already overtaxed your patience, have made any reference to this most recent contribution to the discussion of a question in which no one here can fail to take some measure of interest, were it not for two reasons. In the first place, the author of this paper is Mr J. Bass Mullinger, of St John's College, Cambridge, a writer whose labours in the field of academical history have already obtained for him merited distinction, and whose admirable *History of the University of Cambridge from the earliest Time to the Royal Injunctions of 1535*, has of late been

to me—incidentally, even for one or the other point in this morning's observations—a source of frequent reference and information. In the second place, Mr Mullinger's paper, professing to point out what guidance may be gained from the past history of universities in discussing the question as to the establishment of new centres of university training, includes in its survey much of the ground which I had essayed to occupy in my present address. His brief essay, in its longer or historical part, distinguishes perspicuously between the three well-known stages in the history of European Universities—the first in which they were cosmopolitan or European (the period of the ascendancy, though not the undisputed ascendancy, of Paris), the second in which they were ethnical or national (the period in which the ascendancy of Paris came to an end, and among other Universities those of which I have been speaking this morning were established), and the third in which the Universities, so Mr Mullinger says, became provincial and sectarian (the post-Reformation period, when in Germany the Universities became exclusively Catholic or Protestant, and even the Protestant Universities were severally appropriated to the control of distinct theological tendencies). He touches on similar phenomena in other countries; but it is from German university life that he prefers chiefly to illustrate his argument. He shows that it was not till the close of the 17th century that the movement began whereby the German Universities regained their national, if not their cosmopolitan character, and that this great recovery was necessarily attended by the incorporation of several of the old and worn-out foundations with newer and more

vigorous growths, and by the extinction of others which had come to be recognised as superfluous.

Now, the few hints on which I have ventured this morning as to the true character of university endeavours and university life, so far as they are things of the present and not of the past—when the chief peoples of Europe had not yet established their educational life on a distinctly, though not exclusively, national basis—may have prepared you for a ready assent on my part to Mr Mullinger's conclusion that a national university would appear to be the highest practicable conception in the present age. Such a university, as he justly observes, postulates not merely adequate material resources but a certain numerical strength. Such an institution, as he rightly adds, depends for the elevation of its thought, the dignity of its relations, and the due extension of its influence, on the elimination of all that is provincial, petty, and sectarian. It seems a necessary corollary that such centres of intellectual culture rather than of mere acquisition do not admit of indefinite multiplication.

So far I had read, and I had likewise agreed to the moderately put statement that, whatever may be said of the past, the last quarter of the century has been marked by a series of eminently successful efforts on the part of Oxford and Cambridge towards the realisation of a high national ideal—when I came in eye-shot of the close of Mr Mullinger's article, where in its last page and a half the application seemed at last to be imminent. The present time would, he says, appear to afford little justification of any attempt to institute in this country the provincial, in opposition to the national,



university. Manchester, he assumes, is proposing such an experiment; and already, as he has learnt, Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, and Nottingham are designated as the seats of new and independent universities, conducting their own examinations and conferring their own degrees. Mr Mullinger is evidently terrified by a vision of a kind of academical commune; and seems to imagine a plan on foot for the foundation of a new university in every important town in England, which might certainly have the result of creating a number of "petty," if not necessarily "sectarian," centres. I do not know who are the "designating" persons he has in view; I only know that of the towns mentioned by him one (Leeds) has openly advocated the plan intended to prevent the foundation of a multiplicity of new centres, and eventually aiming at the incorporation of its own college in a university of a federal type—while another (Nottingham) has avowed its desire of "acting with the University of Cambridge,"—an expression which I do not undertake to define, but which certainly does not seem to indicate a desire to become "the seat of a new and independent university."

Not very consistently with his fears of indefinite multiplication, Mr Mullinger proceeds to speak of a second unhappy scheme entertained, as it seems, by those whom he describes as the advocates of a Charter for Manchester. It is the vision of a great central school of scientific teaching with affiliated colleges throughout the country. A deplorable prospect is thus held out of science and letters, philosophy and theology, tradition and invention, drawing off into rival and hostile centres of education and instruction. What are

the facts? The scheme which has been put forth from Manchester contemplates the possibility of uniting with our own College into a single university other colleges, which on due consideration, and eventually after appeal to the supreme educational authority of the Government, shall have been proved to possess a reasonably complete curriculum and a reasonably complete teaching staff in the departments of *Arts and Science* at least. And "the central school of scientific teaching" is a left-handed compliment to part of our College and an incorrect account of it, with the means and opportunities belonging to it in all its departments, and with a system of instruction which never has been and never can be (according to the Charter of our Foundation) confined to a single side of academical teaching. The eminence of our Scientific School, of which it is, I hope, not unbecoming in a professor who has no share in its labours or honours to express his recognition, has not led either the authorities or the teachers and students of Owens College to regard it as absorbing either the efforts or the destinies, whatever those destinies may prove to be, of the College at large. That School certainly has no intention of relinquishing or prejudicing the efforts of the College in other directions, even though for some time to come those who in it pursue the older studies may look to a modest place among their academical representatives, well content if they may in due season be accounted

Extremi primorum, extremis usque priores.

Finally, Mr Mullinger has discovered, and supports his discovery by a quotation which I have not cared

to verify, from what he describes as "one of the latest manifestoes of the supporters" of our scheme, that it is conceived in a spirit unfriendly to the old Universities. I may leave the author of the article from which he quotes to take care of himself; but, being tolerably well acquainted with what has been written and said by those who have acted on behalf of our College in this matter, I may apprise Mr Mullinger that he absolutely mistakes the tone and spirit in which its action has been carried on. It has neither been forgotten what is due to the national traditions, nor what is due to the actual labours of the two Universities, with one or the other of which many of us are connected by ties of personal piety as well as of national pride; and if those Universities, which are not beyond criticism for the very reason that they *are* national institutions, have their shortcomings, it is not as a mere corrective to these that we desire to secure for our own academical life a broad and nationally recognised basis. If the university to which some of us aspire cannot rise above the "local prejudice" (whatever that may signify) of a part of England which has not been usually accounted devoid of national spirit, or slack in national effort—if there is any reasonable ground for apprehending that a system of education such as it has been from the first our bounden duty to maintain and seek to perfect, and such as has with us certainly not selected its agents on any unduly assimilative principle, will be precipitated into "the cliquism of a school"—if our performance of our own tasks prove incompatible with a willingness to recognise the services of other and more venerable seats of learning—then, indeed, the misgivings of our most



recent critic will have been verified. But he owes his readers the proof of his mistrust of us on each of these heads; and though we do not resent it as an insult when he charges us with "provincial ambition," we may ask what right he has to assume ours to be other than *national* ends. His historical argument, if it is worth anything at all, shows that a rapid, almost simultaneous, and so far as local distribution goes, wholly unsystematic *multiplication* of universities is likely to outrun the national need, to necessitate eventual revision, and even (where particular interests are strong enough to prevail) to prejudice the progress of national higher education on its broadest lines. In what way or sense does it prove that there is anything imprudent in the *addition* of a single national university to the number already existing in this country—on conditions not only giving securities to the present, but safeguarding the interests without foreclosing the policy of the future? How far this is a correct description of the scheme which has been proposed on behalf of this College, the present is not a fitting occasion to discuss. But whatever the future may have in store, we may in all tranquillity adhere to the conviction that the usefulness of a seat of academical education must in any case primarily depend upon the efforts of its teachers and students. Elevation of aim, patriotism of spirit, comprehensiveness of system, thoroughness of method—these features of true academical work it seemed worth while even cursorily to illustrate from the records of a time and a nation with which our own have something in common, however widely our means and opportunities may differ from theirs.

(1920) I have thought it worth while to reprint the concluding portion of this paper, without entering into this question whether the fears of the late Dr Mullinger, or the hopes of the critic of his criticisms, have been justified by the results of the foundation, in 1880, of the Victoria University, Manchester. And this, not so much because of the friendship of many years between Dr Mullinger and myself, due I believe in the first instance to this very controversy. Rather, I may recall it without comment, since at the root of our fears and hopes alike lay the absorbing interest in University life and studies which filled a great part of our own, and which, in his case, gave rise to his monumental *History* of our *Alma Mater*.

## 7. SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

(*Craik's English Prose Selections*<sup>1</sup>.)

THE inevitable application to Sidney of the phrase, "the Marcellus of English literature," is misleading, if not altogether meaningless. When his noble life had been sacrificed to the attractions of a futile *coup de Balaclava*, he was mourned at home in England, not only for what had been hoped from him, but for what he had already achieved. Still, it would be idle to deny that never has gallant warrior, true knight, or illustrious writer, been more fortunate than he in the opportunity of his death. To begin with, mutual sympathies were as yet stronger than antipathies in the small but expanding world of English literature; and thus, although the Queen herself had honoured the Good Courtier she had lost, although English nobles were his pall-bearers, while his loss was lamented by the Seven Provinces which he had helped to protect, and acknowledged even by the archfoe whose name he bore, he had no mourners more justly in earnest than the scholars and poets that claimed him as one of themselves. For the soldier who had fallen on the field of honour, the statesman whom his own Sovereign had trusted and whom the Republic of a foreign Kingdom had summoned to its Throne—he, too, had been a citizen of that Arcadia where Imagination holds supreme sway; he, too, had not only taken joy in that Art of Poesy for which he had entered the lists,

<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Craik, *English Prose Selections, etc.* Vol. 1. Macmillan and Co. 1893.



but had as a true student found in it compensation for the disappointments of life and love.

But if Sidney's death thus fitly called forth the tears of the Muses and of their professed votaries—among them of the poet whose praise was in itself a pledge of literary immortality—neither should its coincidence with the beginning of a new era in our literary as well as our political history be overlooked. The year following on that of Sidney's death ended the tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots; its successor, in turn, witnessed the catastrophe of the Spanish Armada. During these few years, Spenser was already at work upon his masterpiece; in their course were published the first productions of nearly all his chief contemporaries among our epic and lyric poets; and to the same wonderful years belong the earlier plays of the most prominent among the immediate predecessors, or older contemporaries, of Shakespeare. How then could it have been otherwise than that the sudden extinction at such an epoch of a light which had shone forth with so brilliant a promise, should be lamented in strains appropriate to a truly national loss?

Yet, apart from all adventitious circumstances of date, who shall deny that in Sir Philip Sidney, a fit "pride of shepherds' praise" was lost to the vocal Arcady around him? Concerning his verse, it must suffice to say that the lyrical form introduced into English poetry by Surrey, and domesticated in it by Sidney and Spenser, would hardly have achieved so speedy and so sure a settlement, but for the fact that neither the one nor the other scorned to pour his own golden soul into the alien literary mould.

Nor was it far otherwise with the more imposing of the two prose works which, even more decisively than *Astrophel and Stella*, have secured to their author the unchallengeable rank of a national classic. *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, written by Sidney at his sister's house as a rough draft for her diversion, some time in the years 1580 and 1581, although not printed till after his death in 1590, forms, of course, a mere link in the connected chain of modern pastoral literature. That chain may, without injustice to Politian, be said to begin with Sannazaro's *Arcadia* (1502), and to reach down, through a series of successors, to and beyond the name-sake works of Sidney and Lope de Vega. In their most salient features all these productions resemble one another. They seek alike to give prominence to those emotions which humanise and soften life in the midst of the very conflicts and troubles caused in part by themselves. Thus, their effect is to exalt friendship and love, but the latter most conspicuously, as absorbing the sentiments of the personages within their range, together with most of the life they lead and of the time they kill. Hence the sameness and monotony characteristic of modern in a far greater measure than of ancient Pastoral. Conversely, modern Pastoral almost imperceptibly substituted its own ineffable artificiality of style for the *naïveté* (conscious only to the extent in which the play of children is such) of the Sicilian Muses. Vergil is as simple and natural as it is possible for an imitator to remain. In Sannazaro there lingers at least the pretence of a rustic tone; in Tasso and Guarini simplicity has become delicacy; the Spaniards refine upon the Italians, and in Sidney the pastoral dress has

become a mere accepted costume. Indeed, his shepherds are in the main confessedly nothing more than courtiers in retreat—"princely shepherds," as he calls them—in their way hardly less conventional than their latest *Louis Quinze* successors. With the conventionalities of scenery and costume those of incident and character become permanently associated; we recognise as inevitable the disconsolate shepherd, the coy shepherdess, and the clown, whose feats and feelings burlesque those of his superiors, although he "will stumble sometimes upon some songs that might become a better brain." Nor are we spared wellknown stage tricks for setting off the stage figures, above all the familiar device of Echo repeating in moans and in puns the final syllables of lines of verse uttered among the rocks or trees.

If, in these respects, Sidney's *Arcadia* must perforce be pronounced the reverse of original, neither is it possible to ignore the Euphuistic element in the style of the book, or the degree in which its initial success was due to this particular cause. *Euphues*, it must be remembered, had appeared in 1579, only a year before Sir Philip Sidney temporarily withdrew from the Court where no figure had shone more conspicuously than his own; and the *Arcadia*, though not printed till eleven years afterwards, was written under the influence of an extremely fashionable and easily imitable model. Probably what seemed choicest in the style of Sidney's work to its early admirers was what most closely resembled *Euphues*. "Oh," cries Master Fastidious Brisk in *Every Man out of his Humour*, when eulogising the "harmonious and musical strain of wit" in a great lady, "it flows from her like nectar...as I am an honest



man, would I might never stir, sir, but she does observe as pure a phrase, and use as choice figures in her ordinary conferences, as may be in the *Arcadia*." And, in the same play, Fungoso, who "follows the fashion afar off, like a spy," says that, while waiting for his new suit of clothes, he will "sit in his old suit, or else lie a-bed, and read the *Arcadia*." Of the significant characteristics of Euphuism hardly one, unless it be a certain monotony of cadence quite out of keeping with the superior versatility of Sidney's literary genius, is altogether missing in his book. Although he is expressly praised by Drayton for disburdening our tongue of Lyly's favourite similes from natural history, or supposed natural history, yet "this word, *Lover*, did no less pierce poor *Pyrocles*, than the right tune of music toucheth him that is sick of the *Tarantula*"; and the Forsaken Knight bears as his *impresa*, or device, "a *Catoblepas*, which so long lies dead as the moon, whereto it hath so natural a sympathy, wants her light." Nor was the author of the *Arcadia* proof against the seduction of mere tricks of sound, quite apart from the metrical experiments which furnish so moderate an enjoyment to his latter-day readers, and which need not be discussed here. Above all, full play is allowed to his intolerable fondness for puns, which a famous American historian calls "the only blemish in his character"; on the very first page of the romance, the very first Arcadian having used the adverb *last* regrets "that the word *last* should so long *last*." Nor can it be denied that, notwithstanding the coherency and consequent interest as narratives of some of the interwoven episodes, such as that borrowed by Shakespeare

in *King Lear*, the *Arcadia* in the general texture of its argument marks no material advance, from the point of view of construction, upon *Euphues* and its direct progeny of love-pamphlets.

But although as late as the days of Sir Walter Scott's *Monastery*, the conception of "perfect Arcadia" as a kind of diction cherished by the "precious," necessarily included an unmistakable admixture of affectation, and although this affectation was mainly imitative, yet Sidney was, to begin with, as he says in one of the most charming of his Sonnets,

No pick-purse of another's wit.

Nor indeed is this, unless at a very early stage of their literary lives, a common crime with those who can boast so splendid an endowment of their own. If his *Arcadia* remains to this day interesting—an epithet which few members of the public that reads to please itself would be likely to apply to Lyly's *Euphues*—the reason is not far to seek. After all, the *Arcadia* is self-confessedly a romance of chivalry in the approved pastoral form; and, as such, it is animated with vivifying power by the spirit of Sir Calidore. This spirit is recognisable in the martial and often very sanguinary adventures which form part of the main argument, dim and discursive though this latter must be allowed to be, albeit used by one most capable dramatist (Shirley) as the plot of one of his plays. It shows itself in the love of manly exercises and diversions, of games and bouts of all kinds, and in the minute interest in the qualities and points of horses and hounds, to which divers passages of the *Arcadia* bear witness. It displays itself

not less in a sincere enjoyment of well-ordered pomp and magnificence, of tournaments and pageants, of brave habiliments and gorgeous drapery. Above all, it finds expression in a passionate devotion to the service of fair women, and an ecstatic enthusiasm in the detailed extolling of their charms. Philoclea is but another name for "Stella ever dear"; Pamela, if she represents any actual woman, typifies a more august, and a more self-restrained, mistress. Nor is it, in this connexion, to be overlooked that, in addition to the desire for chivalrous action, whereby, as Musidorus says, man "not only betters himself but benefits others," and to the tenderness which filled Sidney's soul, the *Arcadia* reflects something of the national political sentiment of which its author was in so many ways a typical representative. This, more than anything, except certain descriptive passages to which in the *Arcadia*, as in the *Færie Queen*, our native English scenery may prefer an exclusive claim, makes Sidney's work distinctively English, and connects it organically with the great national age to which it belonged. St Marc-Girardin has pointed out political touches, which are at the same time delicate flatteries, and which, as he says, denote the courtier. But although we may smile to find that the virtues and the beauties of Urania (Elizabeth)—in Euphuistic phrase her "sweetest fairness and fairest sweetness"—cannot be kept even out of *Arcadia*, yet we remember that the courtier who ushers them in is the Good Courtier of Spenser's beautiful adaptation; and that, to him, his Sovereign is the incarnation of the purposes for which, in camp and Court, life is worth living.



The style of such a writer can hardly lack individuality; and in Sidney's prose this master-quality has no difficulty in asserting itself in the face of more or less adventitious influences. Thus, the Euphuism of the *Arcadia*, though here and there marked enough, cannot be described as a quality of the style of the book at large; as such, its place is taken by something new and individual, although perhaps something not very easy to define. In a celebrated passage printed below, Philoclea is described as "so humble, that she would put all pride out of countenance." A page or two later, the high-minded Philanax from his sickbed demands of his master, discouraged by an oracle, why he should "deprive himself of government, for fear of losing his government, like one that should kill himself for fear of death." In such passages as these, and in many more of the same kind, the antithesis no longer owes much of its effect to sound or cadence; and the point of their wit goes home the more truly, because it has been dipped in moral sentiment. Moreover, the effort is not, after the fashion of Euphuus, painfully elaborated; playful touches of convincing simplicity are not uncommon, such as "No is no negative in a woman's mouth"; elsewhere, the author knows how to stop short, with his Pyrocles, "like a man unsatisfied in himself, though his wit might well have served to satisfy another."

Much more might be said concerning the style of the *Arcadia*, of which there is no reason for assuming that Sidney would have refused, had occasion offered, to lop many of the extravagances. Of these, there is beyond doubt too luxuriant an underwood, but not

enough to choke the nobler growths, or to hide the play of the sunlight between them. If Sidney's humour in the *Arcadia* must on the whole be called conventional, while his pathos is not economised, as pathos should be if it is to become effective, he, on the other hand, constantly shows (the distinction will be obvious) a *feeling* which proves him an artist of a very high order. His descriptive touches, often conveyed in exquisite figures—night stretching forth her black arms to part combatants; a maiden's cheeks blushing "and withal, when she was spoken unto, a little smiling, like roses, when their leaves are with a little breath stirred"—added a fresh charm to English prose, and one which overmatched the more pretentious efforts in the same direction of earlier Elizabethan verse. Nor are such spontaneous beauties out of keeping with frequent bursts of a noble rhetoric—the result, may be, of conscious training, but not the dictation of another man's mind, and at times consecrated, as in one of the extracts given below, to the loftiest of themes. Thus, the freshness, the flexibility, the essential originality and the intrinsic nobility of Sidney's genius reflect themselves in the style of the most notable prose-work, taken as a whole, of an era without parallel in our literature.

*The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* resembles a beautiful and elaborate headgear such as Sidney's sister might have worn at Court while witnessing his prowess at the barriers—a product of nature interspersed with a hundred quaint artifices of wreaths and bugles and ouches and rings. The *Defence of Poësy*, which he wrote about the same time as the longer work, or but little later, is like a single gem in a simple but exquisitely

appropriate setting of its own. The introduction, with Attic lightness and gracefulness, enables the author without effort or flourish to enter upon his theme, the defence of his favourite art—"having, I know not by what mischance, in these my old years and idlest times, slipped into the title of a poet." The subject is treated with both fulness and thoroughness, no care being spared in definition and classification; but, even in the earlier part of the essay, we are inspirited, as we touch the hand of our eager guide, by the contagion of his own generous enthusiasm. More especially in his review of the different kinds or species of poetry are to be found passages of inimitable freshness as well as aptitude—among them, the famous figure as to the effect of "the old song of Percy and Douglas"; although, to tell the truth, it is rather disappointing to be asked directly afterwards, what this lyric would work, were it "trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar."

Naturally, our poet-critic moves with greater freedom as he proceeds to refute the cavils of the *μισόμουσοι*, and permits himself, in the interests of the dignity of his art, to digress into a lively and combative little diatribe on the stage-plays of his day. Yet nowhere is he so perfectly felicitous as in his peroration, where he has very skilfully allowed a wave of humour to mingle in the current of his eloquence, and parts from his reader with the courteous and pleasant tone in which the essay opened.

The *Defence of Poësy* is, accordingly, not only typical of a species of critical essays which were soon to become common in our literature, and which of course are as significant of the preferences of the public as of the tastes



of their writers. It is likewise typical, in choice of subject and in style, of the idiosyncrasy of its author, so modest in his self-estimate, so generous in his judgment of others, so bent upon fancies pure and noble, and yet in the utterance of them so pleasantly abounding in the humour proper to gentle minds.

## 8. AN ELIZABETHAN TRAVELLER (FYNES MORYSON)

(*The Edinburgh Review*, April 1903<sup>1</sup>.)

IT would not, we think, be easy to find an instance, before our English Renascence had in the fulness of the Elizabethan age attained to its flower and crown, of a literary traveller proper, whom we can claim as a fellow-countryman by birth and breeding. By a literary traveller we mean, not so much one of literary or (which is often, but not quite always, the same thing) of academical tastes and training, as him who fares forth with the twofold purpose, first, of seeing the cities and learning the ways of many men, and then, after he has returned home again, of turning his experiences into a book. Raphael Hythlodaye, we remember, who, though his voyages had carried him to localities unexplored by the most adventurous of his contemporaries, "had given himself wholly to the study of philosophy," was a "Portugall borne." The Oxford scholars who, in the middle and later years of the 15th century, crossed the Alps, and of whom a select group helped to inspire Thomas More himself with his enthusiasm for classical studies, can hardly be described as travellers; their purpose was as distinct and definite as was that of the

<sup>1</sup> *Shakespeare's Europe.....Unpublished Chapters of Fynes Moryson's Itinerary, being a Survey of the Condition of Europe at the end of the 16th Century.* With an Introduction and an account of Fynes Moryson's Career by Charles Hughes. Sherratt and Hughes, 1903.

Cambridge men who, at the advent of the New (Lutheran) Learning, were wont to meet in a "Germany" of their own at home. On the other hand, it was not a literary but a mercantile impulse which, already under the early Tudors, and with a tenfold force in the critical years of Elizabeth's reign, when political ambition and religious antipathy added their stimulus, stirred the enterprise of our English mariners. How unmindful they were, after their navigations had ended, of the secondary task of narrating these, was borne in upon Hakluyt, and led him to remedy the defect with a success very imperfectly supplemented by Purchas. And yet Bacon, writing not long before his death, could note it as strange that "in sea-voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sea and air, men should make diaries; but in land-travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it." In the later Elizabethan and early Jacobean period, in the comparatively peaceful interval between the Religious Wars of the 16th century and the Thirty Years' War, "grand tours" had become far more usual, and even fashionable, among young Englishmen of rank and education. Various causes contributed to this result; and one of them no doubt was the respect which Queen Elizabeth now enjoyed abroad, and the comparative safety with which her subjects could accordingly visit other countries<sup>1</sup>. Yet, even of these travellers, few could

<sup>1</sup> Several illustrations of this will be found in Mr Hughes's volume. So far from home as Constantinople, Fynes Moryson found that "the heroick virtues of Queene Elizabeth, her great actions in Christendome, and especially her preuailing against the Pope and King of Spaine, her professed enemies, made her much admired



be called literary in the narrower sense of the term, though Italian and French were now taught both at Oxford and at Cambridge, and not only novel-readers, but, in the person of Thomas Nashe, a novel-writer, went forth into the land where plot and intrigue were to be had for the asking. Of course, the talented Johnian in his *Unfortunate Traveller* deplored, with all the unction bestowed on the theme by Roger Ascham a generation earlier, the perils of foreign corruption for our ingenious youth. But the fashion continued, till already early in the next century it found its caricature in the best-ridiculed book, or perhaps we should rather say the best-ridiculed book-maker, of a demonstratively literary age. Yet the Oxonian Thomas Coryate, though Ben Jonson ridiculed him as Puntarvolo, while Shirley carried on the jest against him as Jack Freshwater and, in the laudatory verses prefixed to his *Crudities*, all the wits of the age combined to make a fool of him, was a traveller of good faith and intelligence, and in the end

of the Emperor [Sultan Mohammed III], and of all the great men of that Court, which did appeare by the letters and guiftes sent to her Maiestie from thence, and by the consent of all strangers that lived in that tyme at Constantinople" (p. 31). At Florence, he was told that the reigning Duke Ferdinand I (de' Medici) "kept the picture of Elizabeth Queene of England and expressed as much reuerence and loue towards her as he might well doe towards the Pope's professed enemy" (p. 100). At the same time the *Civis Romanus* plea could not as yet be used with effect by Englishmen everywhere, and even so near home as Denmark an English sea-captain in difficulties is stated to have jumped overboard, "doubting that the Queene of England, having her hands full with warr on all sydes against the Spaniard, would not easely be induced to write earnestly to the King of Denmarke" on behalf of himself and his crew.

lost his life in a long and arduous journey to the Far East. Four years after *Coryats Crudities*—in 1614—was published George Sandys's *Relation of a Journey begun A.D. 1610*, of which a portion, the *Relation of Africa* (i.e. Egypt) reappeared in Purchas's *Pilgrimes*. Sandys, as became an Archbishop's son educated at Oxford, was a man of considerable literary pretensions; and the most characteristic note of his printed travels is his fondness for classical quotations, always Englished (and often very gracefully so) for the benefit of his readers or for his own delectation. He is very precise in his account of the Holy Land, where, as elsewhere, his narrative is accompanied by admirable woodcuts; but, except occasionally (as in his account of the Turks), he introduces not very much in the way of historical or political surveys into his journal. Of a different type was another Oxford traveller, James Howell, the author of the celebrated *Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ*, whose first journey abroad was undertaken in 1616, and who was at Madrid during the sojourn in that dangerous capital of Charles, Prince of Wales, and his companion Buckingham, but whose *Instructions for Forreine Travel* were dedicated to another Charles, Prince of Wales—the one that may, without flowers of speech, be said to have had more of foreign travel than was good for him. James Howell's career has a wholly modern character about it; for he was a man of business before he became a man of letters, and acquired celebrity as a sort of forerunner of Our Own Correspondent.

Midway, more or less, between the sensational publication of Coryate's *Crudities* and the beginning of James Howell's long service as a writer on foreign

affairs and other subjects of public interest, there appeared so much as was up to our own day to see the light of the *Itinerary* of another literary and academical traveller—Fynes Moryson, for many years a Fellow of Peterhouse, in the University of Cambridge. Fuller, who makes mention of Fynes Moryson as a worthy of Lincolnshire, to which county he belonged by descent, renders no more than justice to him in saying that “of so great a Traveller, he had nothing of a Traveller in him, as to stretch his reports.” But he commits a strange mistake in adding that this “exactly travelled” writer died about 1614. Inasmuch as the first three parts of Fynes Moryson’s *Itinerary* were published in 1617, it would, if Fuller’s statement were correct, have been a posthumous work; and as such it was incontinently set down by Anthony Wood. Seemingly, the mistake remained unrectified till as late a date as 1861, when, in a communication addressed to *Notes and Queries*, the editors of the *Athenæ Cantabrigienses* pointed out that in the printer’s licence, inserted in the original and only edition of the *Itinerary*, Fynes Moryson is stated to have the intention of soon “perfecting” one or two further parts not included in the volume. Messrs C. H. and Thompson Cooper, while adding a very useful summary of the known events in Fynes Moryson’s life, mentioned that a manuscript was preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, which contained a fourth part of the *Itinerary* with the *imprimatur* of Thomas Wilson, dated June 14, 1626. But neither at Oxford nor at Cambridge does the announcement appear to have received much attention; and half a century more elapsed before it occurred to Mr Charles



Hughes, of Manchester, to rescue this "fourth part," or at least the more important sections of it, from an oblivion to which no portion of the work of Fynes Moryson's life deserved to be consigned. The original of the whole work was written in Latin by the author, and the first part of it is extant in this form among the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum; but the English version, which was likewise his own, forms a notable contribution to the literature of Elizabethan prose. The portions of the book which have hitherto slumbered in dignified repose in the library of an Oxford College—the inheritor, by some unexplained good fortune, of these valuable literary remains of a former Cambridge Fellow—contain the very quintessence of his political and social researches, and of the mature reflexions suggested to him by a singularly diversified experience. In recalling, in the first instance, the general course of his life and of the travels which form its chief interest, we propose to make free use not only of Mr Hughes's valuable biographical and critical introduction—Elizabethan in its sympathies, and Victorian in its vivacity—but also of the text of the portions of the *Itinerary* first printed in the volume before us<sup>1</sup>. Mr Hughes has christened this volume, a little fancifully but not altogether inappropriately, *Shakespeare's Europe*; as a

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xxxix. of the *Dictionary of National Biography* contains a terse account of the life of Fynes Moryson, and of that of his brother, Sir Richard Moryson, by the editor, Mr Sidney Lee, written, of course, before Mr Hughes's publication of the Oxford MS., which Mr Lee was quick to encourage. In citing Mr Hughes's volume, we have in each instance referred to the page number; where a quotation is taken from the earlier parts of the *Itinerary* printed in the folio of 1617, the designation "Fol." is added.

matter of fact, Moryson's travels, which began in 1591 and (with the exception of two sojourns in Ireland) ended in 1598, coincided with that earlier period of Shakespeare's activity in which, whether or not he ever paced the platform at Elsinore or "swam in a gondola" at Venice, no impression of travel that man or book could convey is likely to have been lost upon him. Perhaps, Moryson would have been better entitled to the compliment posthumously paid to his book by associating it with so great a name, had he shown in it a more developed literary sensibility; yet, had the former shareholder in the Globe Theatre lived to peruse the work, he would have been gratified by the free recognition given in it to the indisputable superiority of English plays and players<sup>1</sup>. Although, however, Fynes Mory-

<sup>1</sup> "The Citty of London alone hath foure or fiue Companies of players with their peculiar Theaters Capable of many thousands, wherein they all play euery day in the weeke but Sunday, with most strang concourse of people, besydes many strange toyes and fances exposed by signes to be seene in priuate houses, to which and to many musterings and other frequent spectacles, the people flocke in great numbers, being naturally more newe-fangled than the Athenians to heare newes and gaze upon euery toye, as there be, in my opinion, more Playes in London then in all the partes of the worlde I haue seene, *so doe these players or Comedians excell all other in the Worlde*. Whereof I haue seene some stragling broken Companies that passed into Netherland and Germany, followed by the people from one towne to another, though they vnderstoode not their wordes, only to see theire action, yea marchants at Fayres bragged more to haue seene them, then of the good marketts they made" (p. 476). This happened at Frankfort, a favourite resort of the English comedians in the 17th century, both before and after the war (p. 304). Fynes Moryson speaks of the German plays of the time (as well as of the players) with deserved contempt; and at Leyden he saw a play on

son's *Itinerary* supplies no contribution to the Shakespeare allusion-books, it is equally difficult to forget the dramatist in reading the traveller's lifelike account of Italian society, or in learning that Ulric, the younger brother of Christian IV of Denmark, was about 1592 a student at Wittenberg, and that "a grey bearded old Senator" at the Danish Court was named George Rosenkrantz<sup>1</sup>.

Fynes Moryson was born in 1566, as the younger son of a well-to-do Government official—Thomas Moryson, Clerk of the Pipe, and member for Great Grimsby in several of Elizabeth's Parliaments. The family, which was of Northumbrian origin, but settled in Lincolnshire, was very well connected, and Fynes or Fiennes appears to have derived his baptismal name from the celebrated Earl of Lincoln, who held an important public position under four of our Tudor Sovereigns, and was Lord High Admiral under the last

the taking of Gertruydenberg so rudely done "as the poore Artizans of England would haue both penned and acted it much better. So as at the same tyme when some cast Players of England came into those partes, the people not vnderstanding what they sayd, only for their Action followed them with wonderfull Concourse, yea many young virgines fell in loue with some of the players, and followed them from Citty to Citty, till the magistrates were forced to forbid them to play any more" (p. 373). Although Fynes Moryson never alludes to anything in Shakespeare, he must be supposed to refer to Marlowe's tragedy, when, in spite of his appreciation of so much appertaining to Germany or the Germans, he says of their language that it is "such as would make our children affrayd to heare it, the very familyer speeches and pronuntiations sounding better in the mouth of Tamberlin, then of a Ciuill man" (p. 322).

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 175, 176. Prince Ulric died as Bishop of Schleswig.



three. That, as a younger son, he was entitled to no landed inheritance, was a grievance which he could never bring himself to forget<sup>1</sup>. Both he and his younger brother Henry, between whom and himself a devoted attachment obtained, were sent to Cambridge, where Fynes was a student of Peterhouse; and of this college he was on March 13, 1587 (N.S.), by royal mandate elected a Fellow. This academical preferment came to him when young, shortly after, in his eighteenth year, he had taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts. He remained in residence during the usual three years before proceeding to the degree of Master; and he has a curious story to tell how some time before the date of the "commencement," for which his mother had promised to visit him at Cambridge, he and his brother Henry, lying asleep side by side<sup>2</sup>, dreamt the same dream of their mother's passing by with a sad countenance, and saying that she should not keep her promise; and how, though neither of them took much heed of the dream, the very next carrier brought them the tidings of her death. Two years later, being then at Prague, Fynes Moryson was similarly warned of the death of his father, at the very hour, as he ascertained on satisfactory evidence, when the event actually occurred. These are not the only passages in the *Itinerary* implying that its author, though a man of strong common sense in most things, was not insensible to apparent signs of supernatural agencies. As a child

<sup>1</sup> He returns to it in the present volume, where, speaking of the Poles, he observes that "our strange law of giuing all the land to the eldest sonne is not practized among them" (p. 87).

<sup>2</sup> There is no other evidence that Henry was also at Peterhouse.

of his times he was, of course, a believer in witchcraft<sup>1</sup>.

Though an ardent admirer of our national Universities and their collegiate system, Fynes Moryson was not blind to their incidental defects<sup>2</sup>. Thus he thought that, in the case of English graduates, "the injoying of Fellowships (being a Competent maintenance, and a pleasant easye life) perpetually or during their owne pleasures in our Universities causeth much losse of tyme, idle and carelessly spent<sup>3</sup>." He had, however, so far as he was himself concerned, made up his mind from the first not to be an idle Fellow, and had, as he tells us, some years before obtained from his parents permission to travel abroad—the special line of activity on which his ambition was set. A year after his election as a Fellow of Peterhouse, he had been admitted by his society to "a vacant place of privilege for the study of the Civil Law" (which still met with some measure of favour at Cambridge); and in 1589, in accordance with the College Statute allowing two of the Fellows to travel, he obtained a licence to pass beyond seas, which was renewed on several subsequent occasions. The first renewal, in 1590, extended over five years, and was made at the request of Archbishop Whitgift, who had been in various ways connected with Lincolnshire, and among the earliest of whose

<sup>1</sup> See p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> For his admiration of the English Universities, to which he thought only that of Paris came near, see especially pp. 471 and 478. For his remarks on the incompetence of private tutors at our Universities as compared with those in the German, see p. 312.

<sup>3</sup> P. 309.

many Cambridge preferments had been a fellowship at Peterhouse. Fynes Moryson's original licence to travel was, he states, granted to him partly "for the ornament" of his intended profession, partly because of his "innated desire to gain experience by travelling into foreign parts." We may shrewdly suspect the latter motive to have been the dominant one in his own mind<sup>1</sup>; and his College certainly met his wishes in no grudging spirit. The allowance made to him during absence was, he informs us, the handsome annual sum of twenty pounds.

We may suppose him to have devoted the interval between going out of residence and setting forth on his first Continental journey to the acquisition of modern languages as well as of the elements of the Civil Law. He was evidently much interested in linguistic studies, and in the newly printed portion of the *Itinerary* has some excellent remarks which might be commended to the attention of those English headmasters who are, or profess to be, puzzled as to the proper method of teaching modern languages to their pupils. He is for learning one or two, and for learning these thoroughly, as a classical language is learnt, at the outset<sup>2</sup>. He has some other shrewd observations on linguistics, such as that, to which he recurs, on the difficulty of speaking

<sup>1</sup> Dr Caius, it may be noted, in the Statutes which he drew up for his College, allowed only the holders of medical fellowships to carry on their studies abroad (many of them no doubt went to Padua, cf. p. 434); "for theology and the civil law may be studied just as well here as there." Mullinger, *The University of Cambridge*, vol. II. p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 320 *seqq.*



with purity and perfection two or more languages "derived from one roote," such as French and Spanish, both derivatives of Latin<sup>1</sup>. But in etymology he is, of course, far to seek, and it would be nothing short of cruel to give instances of the flounderings in which, like many more learned men of his age, he on this head indulges.

Before starting on his travels Moryson was, in 1590 or early in 1591, incorporated M.A. at Oxford, no doubt with the object of making assurance doubly sure in case of difficulties abroad. It appears from the Peterhouse records that a special allowance was made to him so long as his name was on the buttery-books of an Oxford College; but there is no explicit statement as to his ever having joined either Corpus Christi or any other College in the sister University, nor, of course, was it necessary for the purpose of incorporation that he should do so.

Fynes left England for his first journey abroad on May Day, 1591, and was absent from this country for rather more than four years. Within this period he saw many parts of Germany, Switzerland, the United Provinces, Denmark, Poland, Italy, and France, without penetrating into Northern Scandinavia or Russia, while the Pyrenean peninsula necessarily remained closed to him. His first sojourn was, as became an academical traveller, at Wittenberg; his first winter was spent at Leipzig; he then devoted some time to Prague (whose colleges he found deserted), and some to Heidelberg (still almost at the height of its academic prosperity), and wintered at Leyden. Throughout his

<sup>1</sup> P. 436.

travels he never missed an opportunity of familiarising himself with the features of Continental university life, and contrasting them with the remembrances of his Peterhouse days. He describes decadent Louvain and flourishing Douay, and speaks of Basel, Bologna, and Paris. But it is to the German Universities that he devoted most time and attention; and his picture of their life forms an interesting supplement to the details with which it has been illustrated by Zarncke in reference to a rather earlier period. He notes that in the German universities there are "no Taxers (or Clarkes of the Markett) for the price of vittles (as our vniversityes haue)," and no Proctors "to keepe the night-watches<sup>1</sup>," and is much exercised by the contempt shown for the degree of Master of Arts, which is left to schoolmasters "or men of like quality<sup>2</sup>." On the other hand, he has much to tell of their customs, both official and semi-official, from the taking of degrees which since good Melanchthon's days are denied to no man at Wittenberg, though the ill-qualified are admonished to make up for lost time afterwards<sup>3</sup>, to the "salting" of freshmen<sup>4</sup>. The jests which are customary on this occasion, and the like of which may be read in *Friar Bacon* as well as in *Doctor Faustus*, have a cosmopolitan flavour, but would not gain by repetition. Some relief was necessary after such professorial lectures as had become habitual at Wittenberg, whose best days had evidently passed, not only with regard to the numbers of its students<sup>5</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> P. 316.<sup>2</sup> P. 310.<sup>3</sup> P. 311.<sup>4</sup> P. 317.<sup>5</sup> These had, according to Moryson, dwindled within living memory from 4000 to 800.

These Professors reade continually through the yeare, without any vacations, as wee haue in our vniversities, for they reade in the very Dogdayes. In their Lectures they doe not insist vpon a worde for ostentation of learning and elequence, but in a convenient tyme soundly and grauely absolue the booke they vndertake to expounde....The Students of Germany haue little learning from priuate reading, but take the most part thereof vpon trust or hearesay from the lectures of these graue Professors who dictate their Lectures with a slowe and tretable [*sic*] voyce, which they write out word by word, their many penns sounding like a great shower of rayne, and if the Professor vtter any thing so hastily that the students cannot write it, they knocke vpon the Deskes till he repeate it agayne more tretably<sup>1</sup>.

During the winter of 1592-3 Moryson disposed of the slender inheritance which on his father's death had come to him as a younger son, and then continued his travels. He saw most of the north of Italy, especially Venice and Padua (where he wintered), and Tuscany, besides something of the south; but at Rome his stay was limited to four days, though into these he put as much sight-seeing as the most conscientious of modern creation tourists. Easter was at hand, and the priests attended at the lodgings of the travellers to take down their names, merely with the object of ascertaining whether any of them were not receiving the Sacrament at the approaching holy season, "which when we heard, we needed no spurres to make haste from Rome into the State of Florence<sup>2</sup>." (George Sandys, who visited Rome some twenty years afterwards, likewise stayed there only four days, "as longe as he durst.") Moryson was one of the sturdiest of Protestants, as appears both from his Irish chapters and from other parts of his work;

<sup>1</sup> P. 308.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. Part I, p. 141.



he upholds "our gracious Soueraignes wise invencion of the Oath of Aleagiance," as having "pinched the Papists" by depriving them of the pretence of suffering as religious martyrs<sup>1</sup>; and nothing could be more scornful than his description of a religious ceremonial at Rome, during the whole course of which he insists that he never saw the Pope kneel.

"The Roman Catholikes," he adds, "will say that the Pope prayed at the tyme of the Sea fight against the Turkes at Lepanto many howers by the Clocke with his windowe open (whereof I beleewe that if he prayed the window was open) and that he prayes and kneeles when he is a priuate Auditor and when himselfe sayth not masse<sup>2</sup>."

Equally prejudiced is his ridicule of the Roman practice of exorcism, which, as he must have known, was stoutly maintained by orthodox Lutheranism, in a period of its history of which he supplies an interesting account<sup>3</sup>. But, though he had to leave Rome in haste, Moryson, who was one of the most determined of lion-hunters, carried out his purpose of interviewing Cardinal Bellarmine. He had previously waited on Cardinal Allen, who had formerly shown himself most unfriendly to Englishmen coming to Rome, but had "changed his mind, since the English had ouerthrowne the Spanish Nauy in the yeere 1588<sup>4</sup>." On his way home to England, after wintering at Padua, he paused at Geneva, where he paid his respects to the third great man of his *Itinerary*, "the reuerent Father Theodore Beza," who

<sup>1</sup> P. 285.

<sup>2</sup> P. 440.

<sup>3</sup> P. 454. Cf. the account of the Calvinistic changes under the Elector Christian I of Saxony and the Lutheran reaction, pp. 262 *seqq.*

<sup>4</sup> Fol. Part 1, p. 121.

warned him against the use, even in a moment of self-oblivion, of holy water<sup>1</sup>. The last personage of consequence whom Moryson saw on this journey was King Henry IV himself, to obtain a sight of whom he made a very fatiguing *détour* to Fontainebleau<sup>2</sup>. Altogether, there can have been few contemporaries of Moryson who had the satisfaction of beholding so many Crowned Heads as he<sup>3</sup>, while at the numerous Universities visited by him he must have in succession looked upon a whole "Minerva" of professors.

In December, 1595, rather more than half a year after his return home from his first journey abroad, Fynes Moryson started on his second expedition, this time in the company of his favourite brother Henry. As their travels were intended to take them as far as Syria and the Holy Land, and as their expenses would accordingly be considerable and their risks many, they had recourse before their departure from England to the strange recuperative expedient to which, as Mr Hughes reminds us, Shakespeare makes allusion in *The Tempest*, and which is set forth by Ben Jonson, with characteristic elaborateness, in *Every Man out of His Humour*. The younger Moryson "put out" a sum of about 400*l.*, and the elder the smaller sum of 100*l.*, the borrowers of which undertook to return to the

<sup>1</sup> Fol. Part I, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> Besides the Emperor (Rudolf II), the Pope (Clement VIII) and the Sultan (Mohammed III), he saw King Henry IV of France, King Sigismund III of Poland, King Christian IV of Denmark, the Elector Palatine Frederick IV, and the Duke Ferdinand I of Tuscany, and attended the funeral of the Elector of Saxony, Christian I; nor can we be sure that this list is exhaustive.

lenders the sums of 1200*l.* and 300*l.* respectively in the event of their safe return from Constantinople and Jerusalem; should either of them perish in the journey, the sum lent by him would be forfeited. Fynes, by way of a further investment, which he thought a disadvantageous adventure, "put out" another 100*l.* among five friends for 150*l.* Unhappily, Henry Moryson's money was forfeited, while Fynes did not recover quite the whole of the gains due to him. This practice, which furnishes a curious illustration of the betting propensities of Englishmen, had, by the time of the publication of the *Itinerary*, come to be more honoured in the breach than in the observance<sup>1</sup>.

The Morysons, who set about their journey to the "Near East" in some other respects with less forethought than was evinced by George Sandys, took the precaution of leaving their rapiers behind them at Venice, "hearing what Asses patience they must have except they would perish in the iourney," and "travelled through all Turkey with their hands in their hose<sup>2</sup>." From the experience of the dangers which he actually incurred in the Holy Land, Moryson contracted a curious personal habit which recalls that for which Chaucer was "chaffed" in his day<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Fol. Part 1, pp. 198, 199; and cf. Gonzalo's speech in *The Tempest*, Act III, sc. 3, and Puntarvolo's in *Every Man out of his Humour*, Act II, sc. 1, as well as the humorous scene of the signing of a speculative bond of this description in Act IV, sc. 4, of the same play.

<sup>2</sup> P. 63.

<sup>3</sup>

"What man art thou? quod he;  
Thou lookest, as thou woldest finde an hare,  
For ever upon the ground I see thee stare."

Prologue to *Sire Thopas*.



"It cannot be expressed," he writes in the same connexion, "what great iniuries the Turkes will doe vnto Christians vppon the lightest causes. When we came neere vnto Hierusalem, a horseman of the Army crossing our way, rann a full course at one of our Company with his Launce in rest, who only escaped killing, by the slipping of the Launce into the pannell of the Asse wherevpon he rode, and with like force he was ready to assaile each man of vs, and that only (as our interpreter told vs) because wee did him no reuerence as he passed, so that we were glad to tumble off from our Asses, and bend our bodyes to him, which done, he rode away with a sterne proud looke. For a Turke will not abide any Christian to looke him full in the face without striking him, so as I then vsing to walke with my eyes cast on the ground, as going about some busines, tooke that ill custome which I could neuer leaue, though I haue often bene reprov'd by freindes for the same. Neither may a Christian carry Armes, yea Woe to him that drawes a knife against a Turke....At Hierusalem wee were forced to beare a thousand iniuries, hardly keeping the very boyes from leaping vppon our shoulders from the Shopps and higher parts of the way while their Parents looked on, and commended them for so doing, besides many wrongs done vs in the way by Mores and Arabians...." (Pp. 62, 63).

Thus, morigeration served their turn during the first part of their Asiatic journey; but in the second, when, having sailed from Joppa to Tripoli in Syria, they were proceeding by caravan to Aleppo and Antioch, Henry Moryson succumbed to an attack of dysentery, and his brother had to undergo the most tragic experience of his life, and one of which, as we may readily believe him, he never overcame the effects upon himself. His description of his beloved brother's sufferings and death, and of the despair which befel him as he sat by the dying man surrounded by "the rascall multitude of Turkes and Moores," is very pathetic, all the more

so that he shrinks from using many words "in a case from the remembrance whereof my mind abhorreth." He buried his brother within a high enclosure of stones, to guard his remains from the "cursed iawes" of the jackals, and pursued his journey alone<sup>1</sup>. After a laborious visit to Crete, he sailed by the Ægean and the Black Sea to Constantinople. Here he remained long enough to attain to an insight into Turkish institutions, and the foundations as well as the incidental features of the military empire, which renders his account of them, in the first of the supplementary chapters printed by Mr Hughes, a valuable contribution to our historical information on the subject<sup>2</sup>. The admirable lucidity of the picture may no doubt in part be attributed to the first-hand knowledge derived by him from the English "leiger" Ambassador to the Porte, Edward Barton, a most intelligent and efficient public servant, who died at his post in 1597. Moryson tells us that Barton, "the Lutheran Elshi," as he was called at the Turkish Court, enjoyed great favour there, and "notwithstanding he was poore, had power in his tyme both to treate and depose Princes" under the Sultan's supremacy. He brought about a pacification between Sultan Mohammed and Poland, and, but for his untimely death would, in Moryson's opinion, have succeeded in further making peace between the Sultan and the Emperor. But he was subject to many accusations on the part of the English merchants, by whom (and not by the Queen) his salary was paid; and, unfortunately for himself, "though he understood the Ottoman Court, he did

<sup>1</sup> Fol. Part I, pp. 248, 249.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 1-71.

not understand the English," and managed to give offence to its capricious mistress<sup>1</sup>.

From Constantinople Fynes Moryson returned home by Venice, reaching London about midsummer 1597. His last adventure was, on having laid himself down on a bed at the "Cock" in Aldersgate Street on the morning of his arrival, to be mistaken by the constable and watchman for a Jesuit, "according to their ignorance; for the crafty Priests would neuer have worne such clothes as I then did<sup>2</sup>." But, though back in Shakespeare's England," he escaped being "examined" there.

Fynes Moryson's travels beyond the shores of these islands thus came to an end in the middle of the year 1597, just before a well-marked epoch of European history closed with the death of Philip II of Spain, and at home the negotiations began that had for their purpose the settlement of the succession to Queen Elizabeth. For some reason unknown—except that in those days the training of a traveller was held to go a long way as a qualification for employment as a diplomatist—Moryson was employed in these negotiations; for there can be little doubt that Mr Hughes's conjecture is warranted, and that Moryson's sojourn at Berwick-on-Tweed, which extended over several months from April, 1598, was not due to the extraordinary cheapness of "Salmons and all kindes of shell-fish" in that interesting borough<sup>3</sup>. Inasmuch as, before returning south, he waited upon King James VI at Falkland, we shall not go far wrong in assuming that he was the

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 27-31.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. Part I, p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 272.



bearer of communications—which, for safety's sake, were verbal only—to that Prince from his wellwishers in England; and a connexion between Moryson and the Essex faction may, as Mr Hughes thinks, be indicated by the circumstance that his younger brother Richard held a captain's commission in one of the regiments which Essex took over with him to Ireland in 1599, and was knighted by the "Lieutenant and Governor-General" at Dublin. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked that the Cecils, who stood at the head of the opposite faction, were connected with Lincolnshire and (by marriage) with Moryson's family, and that his subsequent patron Mountjoy, both before and after his departure for Ireland, is said to have "adored" Robert Cecil "as a saint, and counted him his only Mecenas<sup>1</sup>." On his return from the north, Moryson "passed an idle yeere" at the houses of his two married sisters in Lincolnshire, and here found a "pleasing" opportunity of "gathering into some order out of confused and torne writings, the particular obseruations of his former Trauels, to be after more deliberately digested at leasure<sup>2</sup>." It is a narrative of these travels which, with some perfunctory observations on travels in Egypt, Scotland, and Ireland, and a chapter on English and foreign moneys (a subject irresistibly fascinating to him), fills Part I of the work published by Moryson in 1617 under the title of his *Itinerary*. This narrative, at the same time, indicates the materials which were to serve as the basis of the survey of the political

<sup>1</sup> See Sir Robert Naunton, *Fragmenta Regalia* (Mountjoy).

<sup>2</sup> Fol. Part II, p. 4.

and social state of Continental Europe contained in the later portions of the work.

With Part II of the *Itinerary*, which was reprinted in 1735 at Dublin under a title which corresponds to its general contents and character<sup>1</sup>, we cannot concern ourselves here, though it is full of an interest of its own. Moryson's public life began and ended with his services under Mountjoy from 1600 to 1606. On being assured of an appointment under the new Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, he, in August 1600, resigned his fellowship at Peterhouse, being allowed two years' income by the Society from the date of his resignation, "to knit up their loving course towards him." It is much to be regretted that no portrait of him should have been preserved, to take its place among those of the worthies of his most ancient College. Moryson was unmistakably drawn into the public service in Ireland by his Protestant sympathies and his desire to co-operate in introducing there a more thorough system of government and policy than had hitherto been pursued, notably by Essex himself. At the same time, Mountjoy, as whose Secretary he acted, was sufficiently established in the Queen's favour to be an excellent patron to follow. Mountjoy, however, had his own difficulties to contend against, especially after the outbreak of Essex's plot in February, 1601; and he thought it wiser, in view of Moryson's indirect connexion with the ill-fated Earl, to exclude him from his more intimate counsels. It is probable that we owe to this caution on the part

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Ireland, from the year 1599 to 1603, with a short Narrative of the State of the Kingdom from the year 1169; to which is added a Description of Ireland.* Two vols. 8vo.

of Mountjoy, which his Secretary regards as in the circumstances fully warranted, the result that he found time for those duties as a historiographer which he had originally understood would form the chief part of his employment. Part II of the *Itinerary* is such only in name; it is, in fact, a full history of Mountjoy's Irish government, prefaced by a meagre summary of previous Irish history and including, as a purple patch upon a pragmatic and statistical texture, an elaborate character of Mountjoy, after the manner of Plutarch, with a touch, perhaps, of Suetonius. Yet Moryson, besides being wounded in the field, was not altogether out of the range of the transactions which he narrates, and played a part of some consequence on the important occasion of Tyrone's submission, by contriving to keep back the news of Queen Elizabeth's death<sup>1</sup>. He accompanied the Lord-Lieutenant with his prisoner to England, and remained in the service of the Earl of Devonshire (Mountjoy's title from 1604) to his death in 1606. As a recompense of his public services, Moryson had, in 1604, been awarded by the Crown a pension of 6s. a day, on the surrender of other pensions to the same amount. It may be added that, several years later, in 1613, he paid a second visit to Ireland, at the request of his brother, Sir Richard Moryson, the Vice-President of Munster. He found the country much changed, the North possessed by new colonies of English, but especially of Scots, and the "meere Irish in the North and ouer all Ireland still in absolute subiection, being powerfull in no part of the Kingdome excepting onely Connaght<sup>2</sup>." The "next combustion" to be appre-

<sup>1</sup> Fol. Part II, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 299.



hended he thought to be from "the degenerate English Irish," a scathing account of whom forms one of the most striking passages in the remarks on Ireland included in Mr Hughes's volume<sup>1</sup>.

Moryson was now, at last, free to settle down to the fulfilment of his personal ambition. This was to complete the arrangement of the notes of his travels in the form of a continuous *Itinerary*, and to include in it "Discourses" or comprehensive surveys of the several European countries (twelve in all) over which he had successively travelled. Formal completeness and symmetrical coordination and subdivision were among the literary ideals of his age; and, in order to attain to the first of these, he began by abstracting the histories of the dominions through which he had passed in order to prefix them to his "Discourses." These historical abstracts, however, he afterwards suppressed, as likely "to make his gate bigger than his citie<sup>2</sup>," and thereby afforded much relief to his present editor, in whose opinion he is "a painstaking but meritorious historian, and in compiling from books loses his Elizabethan freedom and force of style." In the "Discourses" there are, however, sufficient indications, not only of familiarity with some of the best existing authorities both general and special (from Botero to Guicciardini), but also of an independent historical judgment, occasionally warped by prejudice, but hardly ever clouded by dulness. Of course, he is, here and there, hampered by mere tradition—as, for instance, in the matter of national genealogies—but his actual slips are, so far as we have noticed, extremely rare. When in 1617

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 206-208.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. "To the Reader,"

Moryson actually put forth his *Itinerary*, with a dedication to the celebrated Earl of Pembroke—to whom, among many other books, was dedicated the *First Folio of the Works of Shakespeare*—Part III, containing the “Discourses,” remained incomplete, and was announced to be so both in the King’s licence and in the table of contents. The author excuses himself for the slowness of his workmanship on the ground that, in the first place, he wrote his book at leisure and not as a piece of taskwork; and, furthermore, that he wrote it first in Latin and then very carefully translated it into English, while, in order to save expense, he wrote most of the text with his own hand, and nearly the whole of the remainder “with the slowe pen of his servant.” As, however, it stands in the Folio, Part III consists of nearly three hundred pages. From a general introduction on travel, and a series of aphorisms on the salient characteristics of the several nations of Europe and the chief differences between them, followed by a further series of practical hints, the author passes to what may be called the systematic portion of this division of his work. Here, he sets himself to furnish information concerning the twelve countries included in his *Itinerary* (viz. Germany, Bohemia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Turkey, France, England, Scotland, and Ireland), from the two points of view of geographical description, with a special regard to “trafficke” and “diet,” and of “apparell,” treating both topics with a completeness and variety which would supply material for many a chapter in histories of civilisation, and “local colour” for many a historical novel yet unwritten. The third

head, to which he proceeds, is that of "The Commonwealth," under which he includes, besides dynastic genealogies and an account of the Courts, a survey of the financial, military, judicial, and penal system of each country, together with an enquiry into the diversity of classes obtaining in it. Of this section, he completed, in the portion of his work included in the Folio, so much as concerned Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, furnishing, in the first of these, a very lifelike picture of contemporary German society—of which he perceived some of the ugly as well as some of the commendable aspects, among the former the *Junkertum* of his day and the servile subjection of women—in the second, an instructive treatment of a difficult theme, the earlier constitutional history of Switzerland. With a brief account of "the Netherlanders' Commonwealth" the volume came to a stop.

There remained, for publication at a later date than 1617, not only the large majority of the "Commonwealth" discourses, but also a second and third series which were to deal with each of the twelve countries visited by Moryson under the two further aspects of religion and of "Nature and Manners, Strength of Body and Witt, Manuall Arts, Sciences, Vniuersityes, Languages," ceremonies, and sports. In the "Fourth Part" of his *Itinerary*—really the second division of the Third Part—our indefatigable publicist actually achieved this completion of his encyclopædic survey, which essayed to accomplish, in the case of twelve different countries and peoples, what in our own generation Lord Bryce has done in that of the United States, and Mr Bodley is doing in that of France. Of course,



Moryson achieved his task after a fashion only; but, so far as we can judge from the sections of his work now printed by Mr Hughes, it may be said that his promise was not left unredeemed. The *imprimatur* given to the ms., of which a large portion is now at last in print, by Moryson's Cambridge contemporary, Sir Thomas Wilson, Keeper of the Records, bears date 1626; but Mr Hughes concludes that the ms., which is partly in Moryson's own handwriting, partly in that of two other scribes, with passages (such as Italian quotations) interlined by the author, was completed by 1619 or 1620 at the latest. It concludes somewhat abruptly: "And so I gladly ende this discourse and worke"; and the "Commonwealth " of England is wanting. Whether Moryson ever composed it remains unknown; so that it is unnecessary to speculate on his reasons for abandoning the crowning part of his complex literary undertaking. He died on February 12, 1623; and Mr Hughes's zeal enables us to infer from the traveller's last will, which is otherwise uninteresting, that he died in comfortable circumstances, but, so far as worldly goods were concerned, appropriately enough, "in light marching order."

In the preceding pages, we have endeavoured to illustrate Fynes Moryson's experiences mainly from the sections of his work now first brought to light; and we must, therefore, be brief in our concluding remarks concerning them. We have already commended the insight with which, in his survey of the polity with which Englishmen of his day were least acquainted—that of the Ottoman Turks—he goes to the root of the matter in deducing all its institutions from its military

origin and purpose. There is not a little in this chapter that possesses genuine historical value, as amplifying and constituting our knowledge on the subject, in part on excellent authority. Nor could he have summarised more effectively than in its concluding words, for which we must make room as an example of Moryson at his best, the causes of decay which he found already at work in a Power at which, even after Lepanto, Christian Europe had not ceased to tremble.

Howsoever this power of the Turkish Empire may seeme dreadfull to all Christendome, yet the Emperors of late being giuen to pleasure and nothing Warlike, the whole force being not possibly to be vnited for feare of Christians, and other subjects rebelling, the greatest part of the Army consisting of baser kindes, of horsemen and footemen, the best horsemen generally being corrupted with rurall sloth and dilicate liuing in Cittyes, the best footemen the Janizaires having lost the old seureity of manners, and therewith the old valor of their Predecessors, many of them being now marryed, and all prone to insolent mutinyes, the soldiers generally wanting defensive Armes, and for offence having few musketts or shott...the particuler soldiers of Asia being more effeminate then the rest, the iustice of State being growne to the height of extortion, and oppression, the zeale of their religion being generally in all degrees abated, and the great Commaunders having of late made strong rebellions against the Emperors. For these reasons, and because as Tyranny (especially so great as this) hath neuer been durable, and lastly because the Empire is so great, as by his owne weight it seemes to threaten ruine, Christians may well hope, that the power of this great enemy is declining, if not sodeinely falling, which God in his mercy graunt<sup>1</sup>.

Moryson, although a traveller who rarely writes without his book, not only has the courage of his

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 70-71.

opinions, but is capable of flights of political speculation which show him possessed of a certain species of imaginative power. His remark that Philip of Spain "might with lesse charge and efusion of blood, have conquered all Greece, and Palestine itselfe," than were the cost of his wars with Christians<sup>1</sup> recalls the great "Egyptian design" of Leibniz, which was to have diverted the ambition of Lewis XIV from becoming the scourge of Europe.

When from the Turks he passes to the nation whom of all their adversaries they, as he states, fear the most, because "of its strength in horse," and commends the Poles for their "constancy in councils," we have to remember how, at the time of Moryson's visit, the orderly succession of the Jagellons had only recently come to an end. Of greater interest is the account of Italy, whose social and more especially economical condition (see the passages on "Tributes") is treated both instructively, and here and there with picturesque force, while some noteworthy remarks are made on the policy of Venice after "the League of Cameracum" and on that of Genoa, hanging on Spain "as a dore upon the Hinges." But the sections on Italy and on France, "drawn drye" by the House of Valois before it was left "all in ruine" to the House of Bourbon, alike prove that Moryson's sympathies were not with the Latin races. We may smile at a scepticism which goes so far as to impugn the time-honoured traditions of the valour of the ancient Romans, and suggests that they, like the Italians of the 16th century, carried on their wars largely by employing foreigners. But we

<sup>1</sup> P. 34.



cannot at the same time refuse to see that Moryson's distrust of the Italian character springs from a deeper source than even abhorrence of sensational crime and flagrant immorality. In an impressive passage concerning the Italians of his own day, he declares that they are so diffident in all their spirituall hopes, as they feare nothing so much as death, according to their proverb, Ogni Tormento piu presto che la Morte, that is, all torment rather than death. Then how can these men haue true valor<sup>1</sup>.

But he acknowledges the irresistible charm of Italian manners in the same spirit of justice in which, when treating of the Germans, towards whom he is not less manifestly drawn by community of moral and intellectual characteristics, he makes no attempt whatever to conceal their corresponding defects. But why should we speak of defects, when a perusal of Moryson's account, or the review of any other accessible contemporary evidence, suggests that

in this search, the wisest may mistake  
If second qualities for first they take.

The master passion of 16th-century Germany was no other than that of drink. By this vice every rank of society was tainted; there was hardly a Court whose life was not half dedicated to it; in the Universities no examinations could be held without homage being paid to it; and, worst of all, there was not a pulpit where a voice was raised against it. We may be amused to find Moryson, who is at the pains to argue gravely that the inability of the Germans to bear thirst is due to custom and not to nature, attributing the fact that they "seldome or neuer pronounce any thinge by heart,"

<sup>1</sup> P. 402.

to their memories being weakened by continual drinking. But it is indisputable that this pernicious habit affected the national intellect as well as the national morals, and would have done so irredeemably, but for the fortunate rigour which absolutely prohibited women from indulging in so manly a vice. Moryson notes how it was beginning to creep from Germany into Switzerland; of the Dutch he quaintly says that "howsoever their excesse in drincking be no lesse, yet it is not so frequent and continuall as among the Saxons," or Low Germans, whom he, probably with justice, regards as on this head the greatest offenders.

It might be amusing to note how many features in Moryson's pictures of Italian and German social life, which are the most elaborate to be found in this volume, are still more or less observable in it at the present day; but we have left ourselves no space for such details. His remarks on the educational activity of the Germans, which probably above all other things attracted to them the goodwill of our academical traveller, have a quite modern sound; but, even in such matters, he preserves his independent judgment. Thus, he informs us that "there is one thinge he cannot commend in the Germans, that for desyre of vayneglory, being yet without Beardes and of small Knowledge, they make themselves known more then praysed, by vntimely Printing of bookes, and very toyes, published in their names<sup>1</sup>." Whether he dispenses praise or blame, he shows himself throughout to be neither an inaccurate nor a superficial observer, and he secures our respect by his ready and cordial recognition of the qualities that most ennoble a nation,

<sup>1</sup> P. 299.

as when he speaks of the spirit of tolerance that prevailed among the Bohemians, little thinking as he wrote that a ruthless religious Reaction was about to pass over the doomed land. But it must not be forgotten, either in this or in other passages of the volume before us, that the writer is describing, not the Europe which witnessed the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, but that of the last decade of the 16th century—a difference of nearly a generation.

Moryson's English has the vigour without the ornateness of Elizabethan prose, but while he always writes like a gentleman, he shows no anxiety, like so many of his contemporaries, to remind the "gentlemen readers of both Universities" that he, too, has been bred a scholar. The chief adornment of his rather pedestrian style is a frequent recourse to proverbs or proverbial phraseology<sup>1</sup>, and his vocabulary, though he treats *de omnibus*

<sup>1</sup> Here are a few: At Constantinople he reflects: "Happy are the leane, for the fatt are still drawne to the shambles" (p. 39); and in view of the fact that among the Turks the strict observance of laws is deservedly called tyranny, "What is iust must be done iustly" (p. 60). Ferdinando de' Medici was wont in his passions "to desyre the first gathering of the Rose, but neuer after to care for the Tree" (p. 96). It is true of all men, but especially of the Genoese, that "the hart is where the treasure is" (p. 113). The temporary security of the small Italian States reminds the writer that "a crazed shipp may be safe in a calme Sea" (p. 118). Tax-gathering in the Papal States suggests that "hungry flyes sucke more greedily than those that are full" (p. 121); and the exactions of the Crown in France that "he that clenseth the bodye too much shall at last fetch bloud" (p. 173). The censurable system of changing the Deputies of Ireland frequently leads to excessive activity on their part, as "the Deuill rages more because his time is shorte" (p. 189). German inn-servants take care of horses from human kindness and without supervision, though



*rebus et quibusdam aliis*, hardly anywhere calls for the assistance of a glossary<sup>1</sup>. Thus the last portion of his *Itinerary*, though not printed till nearly three hundred years after his death, may, in an age as "Crittick" as his own<sup>2</sup>, still find readers enough to make good his assertion that the English "much esteeme their owne Countrymen being travelers, wisely iudging that the experience of Uliesses could not but add much to his naturall vertues<sup>3</sup>."

"the Master's eye maketh the horse fatt" (p. 293). And, to end with an ancient saying, the Italians think no revenge worth taking short of death, for "the dead bite not" (p. 403).

<sup>1</sup> P. 1.

<sup>2</sup> One or two *curiosa* may perhaps be noted. He states "plumpe" to be a synonym of "blunt" or "rude" (p. 370); and "*kranch*," which in German means "sick" or "ill" to signify in English "healthful" or "lively" (p. 323). For "vails" he uses the fuller form "availes" (p. 19), and repeatedly employs the English word "stove" as equivalent in meaning to the German "*Stube*." By "treatable" (p. 308, cf. *note*), he would seem to mean "well-managed." (Skeat gives this as the meaning of O.F. and M.E. *tretis*.) He makes use of the word "fletcher" (a maker of bows) (p. 9), but has to paraphrase "skating" as "sliding on pattens" (p. 384). His spelling of foreign names is usually quite recognisable; but "Melvin" (Elbing) (p. 383) may at first sight puzzle some readers, as it puzzled ourselves; "Guesna" (p. 89) is miswritten for "Gnesna" (Gnesen).

<sup>3</sup> P. 465.

## 9. PART OF INTRODUCTION TO SHAKESPEARE'S *HENRY VI*

(*The Renaissance Shakespeare*, Vols. xvii-xix<sup>1</sup>.)

THE precise dates at which Shakespeare first came before the world as a player and as a playwright are alike unknown; nor has it ever been pretended that either of these dates must necessarily be associated with the production upon the stage of *Henry VI*, or any Part of the trilogy. Strictly speaking, no biographical fact concerning him is known to us between May, 1583, when his eldest child was born, and February, 1585 (N.S.), when her twin brother and sister were christened at Stratford—and March 3, 1592 (N.S.) when a play which is at least possibly identifiable with the *First Part of Henry VI* was performed in London. Between these dates, as is well known, erudite and imaginative conjecture have combined to crowd a variety of experiences as multitudinous as are the houses of London town itself; but we are all agreed that before the summer of this year he had been for some time connected with the London theatre. For it was about this date that either as an actor, or more probably, as a playwright, he was vituperated by the unhappy Greene—in what may surely be called the unhappiest moment of the writer's literary life. Thus, with *Henry VI*

<sup>1</sup> *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, Renaissance Edition, Vols. xvii-xix. With a special Introduction by A. W. Ward. New York, George D. Sproul, 1907.

—except on the absolutely untenable supposition that the “Shakescene” of the *Groatsworth of Wit* is a different personage from Shakespeare—the master-spirit of the English drama first enters into some sort of ascertained connexion with it or with its ordinary vehicle, the English stage. For, whether or not he had a hand in *Titus Andronicus*—a question which the present is not the occasion for discussing—no play of that name was performed till 1594, though a *Titus and Vespacia* was acted some years earlier.

This fact, then, gives to *Henry VI*, which Shakespeare’s friends and associates, the editors of the First Folio, chose to include as a whole within the canon of his plays, a priority of place in the whole series from the point of view of date, and thereby an interest of its kind unique. In the second place, I do not think that, whatever critical judgment may be formed of *Henry VI* in its entirety, any doubt can be entertained but that, taken as a whole, this trilogy in its dramatic and in its general literary qualities stands very much nearer to the rest of the great series of Shakespearean Histories, among which a place was assigned to it by Hemynge and Condell, than to the Chronicle Histories, from which species it cannot be regarded as having altogether emerged. Together with a very few other plays—among which we may safely class Marlowe’s *Troublesome Raigne and Lamentable Death of Edward II* (1590–91), Peele’s more or less contemporary, but more rudimentary, *Famous Chronicle of Edward I*, and (in part) Greene’s *Scottish Historie of James IV, slaine at Flodden*, together with the very remarkable anonymous *Sir Thomas More*, probably quite as early in date as the



preceding—*Henry VI* may, therefore, be regarded as marking the transition from unfree beginnings, and from the Chronicle History pure and simple, to one of the most characteristic as well as most memorable of English dramatic growth. For our national historical drama, as its conception unfolded itself in Shakespeare, corresponds in its historical continuity to that of our national life at large, which may safely be described as the feature more than any other differentiating it from the life of other nations. Thus, *Henry VI* holds a position hardly less notable in the general history of the English drama than it does in the series of Shakespeare's plays. Finally, I think that, whatever may be held to be the relations to each other of the several Parts of *Henry VI*, and their comparative dramatic and literary merits, it is undeniable that the whole work is conceived on a grand scale and in a grand way, and that, though it cannot be set down as a masterpiece, its theme "contains matter, and not common things." Without entering at present into the details of his criticism, I cannot refrain at the outset of this Introduction from citing some words of the Nestor of English Shakespeare scholars, Dr Furnivall<sup>1</sup>, because it is above all things desirable that in discussing these plays the great possibilities of their argument, which the execution has at least gone some way to meet, should not be, as it were by accident, overlooked.

"There are few things," writes Dr Furnivall, as usual putting his own ideas in his own way, "I regret more in Shakespeare's career than this: that he did n't turn back to the superb subject of these *Henry VI* plays and write a fresh set on it....

<sup>1</sup> *New Shakspeare Society's Transactions*, 1876, p. 284.

The reproduction of the Lancelot and Guinevere love in Suffolk and Queen Margaret, though with a bitterer end, gives a strange interest to the drama. And, when the thread is woven with the others of Margaret's ambition, cutting down Gloster, the sole support of her and her husband's throne; the working out of her punishment for this, through the quarrels of the nobles and the insidious Richard's schemes; when one sees the Queen of 'peerless feature...valiant courage and undaunted spirit' robbed of her love, her kingdom and her child; the current of her being changed; the woman turned into a demon and a fury; then, dethroned, uttering the dread curse of Fate and Vengeance on the crafty cynical Richard in the pride of his success, and then witnessing the fulfilment of that curse on him defiant, fearing Death as little as he feared Sin...you have a combination of personal and political motives which, had Shakespeare gone back to it later in life, would have given the world the finest historical dramas it will ever own."

In order that the reader may see light through the quite inevitably lengthy and not less inevitably complicated discussion which must be inflicted on him, as to the still-vexed subject of *Henry VI* and of the originals on which the larger portion of this trilogy were beyond dispute founded, the dates of the early editions of the several plays in question should, in the first instance, be remembered. The *First Part of Henry VI*, then, was so far as is known first printed in the First Folio (Hemynge and Condell's), where it appeared in conjunction with the *Second* and *Third Parts* in 1623. Now, as already indicated, Henslowe mentions in his *Diary* a play which he calls, first *Henery the VI* and then *Hary VI*, as performed at the Rose, on March 3, 1592 (N.S.), and as repeated at least fifteen times. And, in his *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication*, Nashe refers to a play in which "brave Talbot (the terror of the

French))" was, "after he had lain two hundred years in his tombe," made to "triumph again on the stage, and have his bones new embalmed with the tears of ten thousand spectators at least (at several times)." On this twofold hint Mr Fleay<sup>1</sup> says, without further hesitation: "On March 3, 1592, Lord Strange's players acted *Henry VI*, a re-fashioning by Shakespeare of an old Queen's play, into which he introduced the Talbot scenes alluded to by Nashe"; adding, as a conjecture, that in 1599 this play passed to the Lord Chamberlain's servants, whence the reference, of which more anon, in the Epilogue to *Henry V*. But we are not able to go quite so fast. It is quite true that Nashe's description, so far as Talbot is concerned, fits the *First Part of Henry VI*; and also that the popularity ascribed to the play by Nashe fits the play mentioned by Henslowe as having been performed by Lord Strange's men and having had so good a run. Yet, especially as the success of a play at one house was quite as likely in the Elizabethan age as it is in our own to lead to the production at another house of a second play on the same theme, the *First Part of Henry VI* was, very possibly, neither the play mentioned by Henslowe nor that to which reference is made by Nashe. This is all we know or can conjecture as to the history of the *First Part of Henry VI*, which was never printed separately before its inclusion in the First Folio under the title of *The first part of King Henry the Sixt*.

"The case is altered" (to use one of the many proverbial expressions which occur in *Henry VI*) with regard to the *Second* and *Third Parts*, or, as they are

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 260.



superscribed in the First Folio, *The second part of King Henry the Sixt, with the death of the Good Duke Humfry*, and *The third part of King Henry the Sixt, with the death of the Duke of Yorke*. These plays were respectively founded on two other old plays, entitled *The First Part of the Contention betwixt the Two famous houses of York and Lancaster, with the death of the good Duke Humphrey; and the banishment and death of the Duke of Suffolke, and the Tragicall end of the proud Cardinall of Winchester, with the notable Rebellion of Iacke Cade: And the Duke of Yorke's first claime vnto the Crowne*; and the other, *The true Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke, and the death of good King Henry the Sixt, with the whole Contention betweene the two Houses Lancaster and Yorke, as it was sundrie times acted by the Right Honourable the Earle of Pembroke his seruants*<sup>1</sup>. The relations between these two plays and the *Second* and *Third Parts* will have to be discussed, in more or less of detail, below; but it will be well to note at once, by way of indicating the general measure of indebtedness of the latter to the former, that according to various estimates rather less than two-thirds and rather more than half of the two *Parts* of *Henry VI* are founded on the text of the two earlier dramas; the portions incorporated being taken over either directly or with alterations and improvements, while the general course of the action in the earlier and in the later play may be described as substantially the same.

<sup>1</sup> *The First Part of the Contention* and *The True Tragedie* have been reprinted by Halliwell-Phillipps under the title of *First Sketches of the Second and Third Parts of Henry VI* in the (old) *Shakespeare Society's Publications* (1843), and in the *Cambridge Shakespeare*, vol. v.

Thomas Millington, the printer of these two plays, reprinted them in 1600; and in 1619 (three years, it will be noted, after Shakespeare's death) another bookseller, Thomas Pavier, to whom Millington had assigned them under the titles of the *First and Second Parts of Henry VI*, published them in a single volume under the collective title of *The Whole Contention betweene the two Famous Houses, Lancaster and Yorke, with the Tragical ends of the good Duke Humfrey, Richard Duke of Yorke, and King Henrie the Sixt, divided into two Parts: And newly corrected and enlarged. Written by William Shakespeare, Gent.* This edition, as Dr Furnivall pointed out<sup>1</sup>, when compared with the original editions of 1594 and 1595 and with the reprints of 1600, is found to contain a few modifications and elaborations of some significance; but they cannot be drawn into any kind of comparison with the changes introduced in our extant *Second* and *Third Parts* of *Henry VI*. It may be added that, in 1623, Blount and Jaggard, who were among the publishers that had the immortal honour of taking part in the publication of the First Folio, entered in the Stationers' Registers *The Thirde Part of Henry the Sixt*; but this is, quite obviously, the play which appeared in the Folio under the designation, by which it has ever since been known, of the *First Part*.

The sole remaining piece of evidence which—besides bearing upon the question, to be discussed below, of the relation between the *Second* and *Third Parts* of *Henry VI* and the two old plays on which those *Parts* were founded—directly affects that of the dates

<sup>1</sup> *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1876, p. 285.

of all four plays, is the notorious passage, always with us, that occurs in Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit*. This miserable manifesto of an embittered but unchastened spirit, a literary testament more concentrated in its malice than those of which Villon and Dunbar had furnished earlier examples, proceeded from a man of talent. But Greene's fate, like that of many men of talent without character, was, when he met with one superior to himself, to fail to recognise him as such. And it is certainly noticeable, as pointed out by Mr Fleay<sup>1</sup>, that not long before the time when Greene sat down to compose his *Groatsworth of Wit*—which, as he died September 4, 1592, must have been in one of the summer months of that year—the play on Henry VI, which may have been *Part I* of our trilogy, had been produced with success at the Rose Theatre.

The play, which was acted fifteen times between the date of its production in March, 1592, and January 31, 1593, was therefore "in action" when Greene addressed "his quondam acquaintance" in his pamphlet. In any case, Greene's appeal, which proved a most lamentably mistaken appeal to posterity, was brought to some measure of completeness before his death, and was soon afterwards, ere the year was out, edited and brought out in print by Henry Chettle<sup>2</sup>. It contained, together with other matter not destined to bring blessings on the dead man's name among his fellow playwrights, the passage which he would probably not have expected

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> The earliest edition extant is dated 1596; but there is no reason for supposing it to have differed from that of 1592. Cf. Churton Collins, *Dramatic Works of R. Greene*, vol. I. p. 49.



to be the best-remembered in all his works and of which he cannot be supposed to have wished to leave the application open to doubt:

There is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers [i.e. Greene's, Marlowe's, and those of a third person unknown] that, with his *Tyger's heart wrapt in a player's hide* supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you; and, being an absolute *Johannes factotum*, is, in his own conceit, the only Shake-scene in a country.

Now, it is not, for the present purpose at all events, of decisive importance whether Greene in this passage intended to refer to Shakespeare as a playwright or as a player. The language in itself seems to point to the latter interpretation; but the quotation dragged in (unless a special meaning attached to it beyond our power of guessing), which occurs both in the *True Tragedie* (sc. 3) and in the *Third Part of Henry VI* (Act I, sc. 4), where the speech of which it forms part in the earlier play is almost textually reproduced, seems almost unmistakably to imply that it implied a charge of literary plagiarism. But there is no absolute certainty in the case: although after his death Greene was described as having been subjected to the "perloining" of his "plumes<sup>1</sup>," Henry Chettle, in his *Kind Harte's Dreame*, published in the following year, 1593, while making what was obviously intended as a general apology to Shakespeare, yet refrained from disavowing, explicitly or implicitly, Greene's charge against him—whether it was, or was not, one of plagiarism. In any case, the much-disputed passage in the *Groatsworth of Wit* makes it certain that the *True Tragedie* was

<sup>1</sup> "R. B." in *Greene's Funeralls*.

extant in 1592; and, if plagiarism was the charge intended by Greene, it strongly confirms the probability of the *Third Part of Henry VI* having been then well known on the stage, as well as that other play on *Henry VI* which may be the *First Part* of the same trilogy.

Little need be added in this place as to the stage history of our trilogy. As is well known, the annals of the English stage by no means always grow more certain as they proceed; and it is not quite clear (and was in fact a subject of dispute on the occasion of the performance of the *First Part of Henry VI* by Mr Osmond Tearle and his company at the Stratford-on-Avon festival in 1899) whether the piece performed at Covent Garden for Delane's benefit in 1738<sup>1</sup>, was the play printed in the Folio of 1623, and perhaps acted by Lord Strange's men in 1592-93, or Crowne's perversion of that play and of the earlier half of the *Second Part*, produced at Dorset Garden in 1681. In the latter case, Mr Tearle was the first to produce this *First Part* on the English stage since the closing of the theatres in 1642. The German production at Weimar in 1864 comprised two plays, *Part I* and *Part II*, according to the revision (or version) of F. Dingelstedt. *Part II* was produced by Messrs Shepherd and Anderson (the latter playing Jack Cade) at the Surrey Theatre in 1864. With this exception, when until recently *Henry VI* was

<sup>1</sup> See Genest, vol. I, pp. 302 *seqq.* This is not reprinted in Crowne's *Works*. It was followed by a *Second Part*, opening with Cade's rebellion, and including the action of *Part III of Henry VI* much garbled. This portion, again, was utilised by Theophilus Cibber in his *Historical Tragedy of the Civil Wars*, etc., produced at Drury Lane in 1723.

brought out on the English stage, as in Edmund Kean's farrago of all the three *Parts* in 1818, it was always condensed into a single play. In any case, Mr F. R. Benson's<sup>1</sup> production of *Henry VI* in the Endowed Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon on May 2-4, 1906, was the first attempt made since the closing of the theatres in 1642 to produce all the three plays in succession to one another. My present task has been greatly facilitated by the impressions freshly conveyed to me of this memorable performance through the kindness of my friend Miss Alice D. Greenwood, to whom this Introduction is under many other important obligations.

Passing from the history of the trilogy of *Henry VI* to its sources as a whole, we shall not fail to observe that for a dramatic treatment of this reign ample material, of a kind familiar to the reading public in existence, was at the disposal of the playwrights of the Elizabethan age. It was to be found in those Chronicles which issued in so rapid a succession from the printing-press of the times. As has been already stated, and will be more fully shown in the course of this Introduction, the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* closely followed in the course of their argument two earlier plays, which for convenience' sake I may henceforth cite as *The Contention* and *The True Tragedie*; but these were entirely founded on wellknown Chronicles, while the slight corrections of statements in the earlier plays occasionally introduced in the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* show their authors to have themselves been perfectly conversant with the same popular historical authorities. As to the *First Part of Henry VI*

<sup>1</sup> Now Sir Frank Benson.



there existed, so far as I am aware, no earlier dramatic model which might have been followed in the action of this play, and it was therefore in all probability compiled throughout directly from the chroniclers.

Among the numerous possible sources, then, which were at the disposal of the authors of the three Parts of *Henry VI* and of the two old plays on which the *Second* and *Third Parts* of the trilogy were respectively founded, there can be no doubt that those actually used by them were Halle's *Union of the Two Famous Families of Lancaster and York*, printed in 1548; Holinshed's *Chronicle*, in the second and complete edition of 1588, and the celebrated series of didactic biographies in verse, which appeared in 1559 under the title of the *Mirror for Magistrates*. In a less degree, Fabyan's (edition of 1559) and probably Grafton's *Chronicle* (edition of 1579) were consulted; and it is just possible that Stowe's *Annales* (1580) and Monstrelet's *Chronique* (1572) should be added to the list. In any case, the influence of Halle and Holinshed upon our *Chronicle Histories* and other early English historical plays—and, consequently, upon the formation of a stereotyped popular conception of a whole period of our national history—can hardly be overrated<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The following note may from the above point of view be acceptable. *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* (supposed to have as early a date as 1580, acted at all events before 1588, and entered at Stationers' Hall in 1594) could not have been based on the second edition of Holinshed; the earlier (1577) seems to have enjoyed less popularity; and no incident in this *Chronicle History*—not even the celebrated "tennis balls"—can be traced to Holinshed alone, while several details are to be found in Stowe; the death-bed scene at the close is in Halle (who took it from Monstrelet); some things

Whether for the main course of the story as exhibited in the trilogy, Halle or Holinshed was actually

appear to have been taken over from Titus Livius. Marlowe's *Edward II* (1589, printed 1594) is unmistakably founded in the main on Holinshed, though a few details are taken from Stowe and one song from Fabyan. *Sir Thomas More* (1590) is from Halle, or from Holinshed, who conveys Halle *in toto*, and from certain wellknown biographies. *The Troublesome Raigne of King John* (acted 1589, printed 1591) is from Holinshed, with the exception of a few incidents, among them Falconbridge's sack of the monasteries; and perhaps also from the *Mirror for Magistrates*. Peele's *Chronicle History of Edward I* (1593) is from Holinshed, though the historical material in this play is so meagre that it might well have been taken from any chronicle, while Holinshed runs counter to the play in one or two minor particulars and in the praise of Queen Eleanor, of whose crime and fate (the sources of which cannot here be discussed) he says nothing. *The True Tragedy of Richard III* (1594) is based mainly on Holinshed, who, like Halle, was powerfully influenced by Sir Thomas More's *History of Edward V and Richard III*, published (incomplete) in English in 1509—a work which may have been inspired by Henry VII's Chancellor, Cardinal Morton, but which is no longer held to have been written by him in its Latin form. *Edward III* (1595), which has been attributed to Shakespeare, appears, so far as the story of Edward and the Countess of Salisbury is concerned, to have been founded on Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1575) and perhaps on some old ballads, although a good deal of it is in Froissart (not all translated by Lord Berners); other incidents are taken from Holinshed. Of Greene's *Scottish History of James the Fourth* (printed 1598) the source had not been discovered by Dyce or by D. Laing; Mr P. A. Daniel traced the source of this quite unhistorical Chronicle History to a story in Cinthio's *Hecatommithia*, dramatised by Cinthio himself in his *Arrenopia*. Cf. Churton Collins, *Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*, vol. II. p. 80. *George-a-Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield* (1599), which has been ascribed to Greene, was probably founded on an old prose *History of George-a-Greene*, of which, however, no early impression exists; the earliest printed copy is dated 1706. Cf. Churton Collins, *ib.* p. 103.

used, it is impossible to say; for Holinshed copied Halle and Grafton wholesale, as Grafton did Halle. But we shall probably not go far wrong in assuming Part I to be indebted chiefly to Halle, and the corrections and additions made in and to the text of the two old plays and embodied in Parts II and III of *Henry VI* to be generally derived from Holinshed. But the conceptions of the several characters in all three *Parts*—often merely adumbrated in the *Contention* and *True Tragedy*—are due to Halle and to the *Mirror for Magistrates*. The latter work was itself, in part, indebted to Halle; but it supplied the conceptions of several minor characters in the plays, which, hardly less than Halle's more important characters, appear to have become accepted as part of a fixed tradition. Halle was Yorkist in sympathy, and strongly biassed against the Beauforts and Suffolk; Holinshed tones down Halle's adjectives, and indeed seems to avoid preserving the dramatic impressions so strongly created by his original.

The dependence of the writer or writers of *Henry VI*, and of those of the earlier plays on which it was in part founded, on so limited a range of authorities (though far from exceptional) may help to account, in some measure, for the imperfect justice done by them to the opportunities of their theme. On the subject of these opportunities I have already cited Dr Furnivall; but it may be worth while to add a few words in illustration of the fact that not every historical dramatist, nor even a great historical dramatist whose powers have not yet reached their maturity, is capable of reproducing in relation to a given theme all that history suggests as to the human interest presented by the characters belonging to it.



Thus, if in *Henry VI* we seem to find reproduced the essential characteristics of Queen Margaret, the one heroine of the trilogy, such is hardly the case with the pathetic personality of her less fortunate consort. Queen Margaret appears as what she no doubt was, a woman of uncommon ability, whose judgment of the action necessary in situations of extraordinary difficulty was rarely at fault—except in the instance of her failure to advance upon London after the second battle of St Albans, a proceeding whereby, in the view of more than one historian, both King and Queen might have been preserved. Her private letters show her to have worked hard in the interest of all her dependents as well as in her husband's and her late-born son's; and it is only a dramatic fiction<sup>1</sup>, lacking any basis of historical fact and which seems to derogate from the Queen's notability, that represents her as falling in love with Suffolk, the heir of Cardinal Beaufort's policy and of his unpopularity (much in the manner in which another Queen—Catharine—according to a story which found its way to the stage, fell in love with Owen Tudor). While the interest aroused by a powerful historical figure is thus unnecessarily supplemented, the character of Henry VI is presented with, at the best, imperfect sympathy. It is true that the King is never wholly lost in the meek-minded and generally meek-mannered dreamer who passes across the scene almost like a shadow; nor was this royal self-consciousness altogether wanting in the real Henry, who, when as a prisoner in

<sup>1</sup> It was a lamentable incident in a delightful national and artistic experience—the Bury St Edmunds Pageant of 1907—to have to witness the survival of this and other fictions in the Henry VI episode.

the Tower his patience was tried by intrusive visitors, was wont to reply to them with a curious mixture of humility and pride<sup>1</sup>. But, on the one hand, the full pathos of the long-protracted situation, which was at the same time the best warrant for the opposition offered to Henry's government by both high and low, can hardly be said to be brought out in the dramatic narrative. No mention is made of his imbecility and apathy of mind, which periodically rendered him, like a much later English sovereign, incapable of performing the ordinary duties of life, and which left him dumb and uninterested, even when his new-born son was brought into his presence. He looked at the child for an instant, and then, without a word, "cast doune his eyene agen<sup>2</sup>." This melancholy aspect of Henry's life is left out for obvious reasons; but to present and account for it would have been a task worthy of a great dramatist. On the other hand, it is difficult to suppress a wish, that, instead of King Henry's royal contempt for common men being emphasised in a striking passage<sup>3</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Stubbs (vol. III. p. 201) quotes from Blakeman: "When pressed by some impertinent person to justify his usurpation, he used to answer, "My father had been King of England, possessing his crown in peace all through his reign; and his father, my grandfather, had been King of the same realm. And I, when a boy in the cradle, had been without any interval crowned in peace and approved as King by the whole realm, and wore the crown for well-nigh forty years, every lord doing royal homage to me, and swearing fealty as they had done to my forefathers....My help cometh of God, who preserveth them that are true of heart."

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from the news-letter printed in Gairdner's in the *Paston Letters*, No. 195, by Sir James Ramsay, *Lancaster and York*, vol. II. p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> Part III, Act III, sc. i.

opportunity had been found in the course of the trilogy for giving expression to what was the noblest and humanest side of his character—his love of learning and religion (for the two were of course to his mind inseparable), by virtue of which his name has become a memory of something besides ignorance and misfortune.

To Edward IV—unlike Henry VI surely one of the least interesting of our kings—fair treatment seems to be accorded in the trilogy which bears the name of his rival. The contrast between them—not in physical stature only; for Edward was most uncommon tall, while Henry appears to have been diminutive in size—may, together with the personal beauty attributed to Edward, have gone some way towards accounting for his popularity with the Londoners, or at all events with their wives, since, as *Part III* does not fail to indicate, no prince was ever more of a squire of dames. But, of course, it was the close connexion between the line of York and the house of Burgundy which counted for most in the value attached to the ascendancy of the former by the classes principally concerned with trade and industry. At the same time, it is unquestionable that his military ability was greater than that which can justly be ascribed to most of the commanders in the Civil War of the two Roses—to Warwick in particular, the great King-maker, who made kings by his skill as a politician rather than by his prowess as a soldier. To be sure, military ability—or at least the conditions under which it proves itself such—is one of those qualities which our, or any, stage cannot pretend to demonstrate. Richard, Duke of York, Edward IV's father



and predecessor in that dukedom which it was only an after-thought on the son's part to make the basis of a claim to the throne<sup>1</sup>, exhibits neither in history nor in the trilogy the power of controlling events, instead of being controlled by them; and, in point of fact, there is no perceptible individuality about him. Of the younger two of the three York brothers, Clarence, as depicted in the trilogy, furnishes, as we may believe him to have done in life, an example, conspicuous even among his contemporaries, of sheer unimaginative eagerness for the advancement of his own interests. Far subtler, as well as more strenuous, was the nature of Richard Duke of Gloucester; but in his case, as will, no doubt, be shown at length in the Introduction to *Richard III*, a definite conception had already fixed itself before our trilogy and that play sought to elaborate, develop, and in a measure account for it. In the Richard of Gloucester of the trilogy nothing is more notable than the imperious sense of commanding force which distinguishes the character from the first, accompanied throughout by a mocking irony, which, in the Elizabethan age, could hardly clothe itself in any other form than that of the Scriptural or quasi-Scriptural speech so specially affected by the Puritans.

But we have been carried on towards the close of *Henry VI*, without having as yet touched upon the

<sup>1</sup> "Richard could not fail to be acquainted with the history of his own family, and he had been careful not to advance any personal claims, unless the assumption of the surname 'Plantagenet' could be considered such." Ramsay, *u.s.* vol. II. p. 134. It would be difficult to show that he was aiming at the Crown before 1459, three years after the close of his second Protectorate.

general treatment of historical personages prominent in the earlier portions of the action of the trilogy. At the outset of the reign of Henry VI, the inherent difficulties of government and country were, as is well known, aggravated by the dissensions between those upon whom, during the sovereign's long minority, a special responsibility for the care of State affairs could not but be held to devolve. Unluckily, it was thought indispensable to entrust the preservation of the English rule in France to the Duke of Bedford, who had best claim to the chief control of affairs at home, and who, as "a sober-minded statesman of the best English type<sup>1</sup>," might very possibly have exercised it with the acquiescence of those who stood next to him in birth or in service. It thus became impossible for Bedford, except by occasional intervention, to do what he might have done towards maintaining the Lancaster dynasty and averting the Wars of the Roses; while, at the same time, by no clearly assignable fault of his own, he failed in carrying out the special task allotted to him. Yet he is not wholly to be compassionated; for his character, partly no doubt because no faction in the State had any interest in traducing it, remains untarnished by the misrepresentations of either chronicler or dramatist.

Very different was the case of the two foremost representatives of the Lancastrian interest who, during Bedford's absence, disputed with one another the control of the English administration, and whom in 1425, on a visit paid by him to England for the purpose, he attempted to reconcile. Henry Beaufort and Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, though with intervals

<sup>1</sup> Ramsay, *u.s.* vol. I. p. 323.

during which a *modus vivendi* obtained between them, and with one pretence of a reconciliation on the occasion just mentioned, carried on their contention, till a strange dispensation of fate ended the lives of both, within a few months in the early part of a single year (1447). Probably, no two English public men have ever been so persistently misjudged as this pair of antagonists. It is true that this misjudgment is of a very different kind, and has a very different origin, in the one and in the other instance; and it must, also, be allowed that the *Henry VI* plays do not adopt it to the same extent in both cases. On the character of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester these plays cannot be said to cast any light such as might have contributed either to a deeper or a more veracious interpretation of it; while, as to Cardinal Beaufort, they have simply contributed to heighten a prejudice already cruel enough in its injustice. Cardinal Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, was a great ecclesiastical potentate, whose consistent aim it was to augment both his public and his private resources; for it is quite clear that he had recognised how in the age in which he lived—probably at least as much as it has been in any other period of our national life—wealth was the most effective support of political and social influence. But he was, also, a prelate of his Church who, in his life and when he was thinking of his death, was singularly awake to the beneficent ends which it has in all times been the highest privilege of wealth to seek to further<sup>1</sup>. Not less certain is it that Henry

<sup>1</sup> This is very forcibly shown in a lecture on *The Life and Times of Cardinal Beaufort*, published in 1880, by the present Archdeacon Fearon, the late Headmaster of Winchester. Dr Fearon



Beaufort was from first to last desirous of accommodating the entire course of his action as to both Church and State to the interests of the Lancastrian dynasty, with which he was by birth connected and with whose fortunes his own were of course closely bound up; and it would be difficult to show that he at any time either misrepresented or misunderstood those interests. In Henry V's reign, he encouraged the prosecution of the French War, and was largely responsible for the conclusion of the Burgundian alliance which was essential to its success. Later, in Henry VI's days, he identified himself with the policy of peace, showing a magnanimous as well as statesmanlike contempt for the unpopularity which such a policy entailed. His relations to the Papacy are more obscure; but they concern the scheme of our trilogy very little, except in so far as Beaufort's Cardinalate (which has been called the great mistake of his life) unmistakably contributed to his unpopularity. At all events no ecclesiastical interests could with him ever take precedence

gives good reason for believing that it was to Beaufort that the foundation of Eton and King's Colleges was originally due; at all events, every detail as to the new foundations was submitted to him by the King, and their endowments were increased by the Cardinal's will. I must not venture to suggest that Beaufort's interest in university life may have dated from the time when he had a chamber in Peterhouse (see J. H. Wylie in *Historical MSS., First Report*, p. 78; cf. Mr Wylie's *Henry IV*, vol. III. p. 263; and also Dr T. A. Walker, *Peterhouse*, London, 1906, where it appears that Beaufort paid 20s., *pro pensione camerae*, while in the same year a bachelor of the University paid 6s. 8d. under the same head). Mr Wylie has exploded the story of Beaufort's having been at the University of Aachen, which of course should be Oxford.

over national; and this he showed, at a critical moment, by transferring, in 1429, the troops which he had levied for a Catholic crusade in Bohemia to the service of the Crown, when an endeavour was made to recover the English position in France after the fatal battle of Patay. During the last few years of his life—apparently from the conclusion of the King's marriage in 1445—the Cardinal had withdrawn from politics, in which he had been a constant factor for nearly half a century, and devoted himself to the interests of his diocese. Thus, apart from the fact of his exceptional wealth—a circumstance which seems to have irritated the popular consciousness in the 15th century very much as it does in the 20th—it would not be easy to understand why the chroniclers and dramatists of the Tudor period should have imbibed so ill-founded and vehement a prejudice against him, imputing to him even a degree of criminality which is held to be appropriately attested by self-torment in the hour of death—were it not that they were children of their times. To the Reformation ages a powerful and wealthy Cardinal (whether his name were Wolsey or Beaufort) signified an offender on a grand scale against both the human and the divine order of things<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, the perpetuation of the calumnies against Cardinal Beaufort with which the trilogy of *Henry VI* is chargeable, remains, with a single exception the worst offence against historical truth (in no trivial sense of the term) which it contains.

This exception is not the treatment of the character of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. Here, instead of recording a blind adherence to the perversity of popular

<sup>1</sup> Compare R. Pauli's *Englische Geschichte*, vol. v. p. 286, note.

censure, we have rather to notice the neglect of elements that might have added life and variety to the kindly *unisono* of popular praise. Humphrey Duke of Gloucester—"the good Duke," as after his death he came to be called—was a prince of no very exalted character or commanding ability; and the long-enduring sentiment which attached itself to his name was probably due to pity for his supposed cruel fate, as well as to the tradition of his goodwill towards the Commons, and to an actual pleasantness of manner which, as we know, is an unfailing passport of royalty to popular favour. Neither his position nor his qualities ever secured to him a commanding influence over the policy of the State. His early projects of obtaining the inheritance of Jacqueline, the heiress of Holland and Hainault, were seen to be dictated by a desire of personal aggrandisement, and had to be dropped; nor was he chivalrous enough to remain true to his wedded wife. He afterwards favoured the policy of war in France; but he was without such resources as those which gave importance to his uncle and rival's support of the same line of action beyond the Narrow Seas, while in home affairs he confined himself to the manœuvres of selfish intrigue. Probably, no higher motive animated his activity against the Lollards, when in 1431 their fly-sheets were "about every good town in England" denouncing the clergy who were possessors of property, and advocating a community of goods. He laid hands on some of their leaders, and secured from the Privy Council a pecuniary recompense of his services to the orthodox religion. These earlier occurrences the dramatic version of Henry VI's reign not unnaturally



ignores; but it likewise has nothing to say about Duke Humphrey's relations to learning and science, which connect his name as that of an early literary benefactor with the history of the University of Oxford, and which continue to engage the attention of modern students<sup>1</sup>. Our trilogy occupies itself mainly with the Duke's fall, and with the prelude to it supplied by the strange trial and cruel penance of Eleanor Cobham, Duke Humphrey's mistress, for whom, though they were probably never actually married, he had secured more or less formal recognition as his wife. The episode of her collapse is appropriately introduced into this Chronicle of violent ambitions and their consequences; although the question as to Eleanor's actual guilt, or as to the length to which her restless spirit carried her, is of course one that will never be solved. Humphrey of Gloucester was not shamed by the catastrophe of his partner, or by his inability to hold out to her a helping hand, into withdrawal from public life. But his political influence was, thenceforth, at an end, and his final downfall had become only a question of time. That it was marked by his murder seems, though a natural, to be an unproved, assumption. Humphrey was physically as well as morally an utter wreck, when he passed away, after he had been arrested for treason at the Bury Parliament (1447). The repetition of the story of the murder of the "good Duke" in the play may be regarded as one more attestation of the popularity which so long clung to his name, but which was originally due to

<sup>1</sup> See the attractive chapter "Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, a fragment of a princely life in the 15th century," in Pauli's *Pictures of Old England*, English Translation by Miss Otté, 1861.

negative rather than to positive reasons—to the fact that he was not a foreigner, not a friend to the Queen, and not a priest<sup>1</sup>.

At the other end of the social scale, according to a view of things which in no Elizabethan drama asserts itself more pointedly than in this trilogy, stands the popular agitation which, for a moment, obliged King Henry VI and the oligarchical factions around him to treat with it on terms of equality. To the author of the famous Jack Cade scenes the aim of the rising which he ruthlessly caricatures seemed sheer topsy-turvydom; henceforth "seven halfpenny loaves were to be sold for a penny"; all the realm was to be in common; Jack Cade the clothier was to be King; and Lord Say must lose his head because he could speak French and therefore was a traitor—moreover, had he not most treacherously corrupted the youth of the realm by erecting a grammar school<sup>2</sup>? As a matter of fact, the anarchy which reached its height in the insurrection of 1450 was

<sup>1</sup> According to Ramsay, vol. II. p. 76, note, of the 247 books presented by the Duke to the University, three remain in the Bodleian, besides a scriptural commentary written for him by Capgrave at Oriel. He also contributed to the building of the University Schools. Bishop Bekyngton and Pecock, the liberally minded author of the *Repressor*, as well as Titus Livius, whose *Life of Henry V* is held to mark the beginning of the classical Renaissance in England, were both patronised by the Duke.

For an illustration of the attitude of the Tudor age towards historical truth, the reader may be referred to the exposition in Bishop Latimer's sermon to King Edward VI, cited below, of the merits of the contention between Winchester and Gloucester.

<sup>2</sup> This last is a curious touch. Is it, conceivably, to be traced to memories of the Pilgrimage of Grace and the grievances connected with the Dissolution of the Monasteries?

the inevitable result of a weakness of government that had long continued. In 1441-43 there had been a series of disturbances in different counties, due in part to private feuds, in part to fanatical preaching, and in the north to a determination not to submit to the exactions of the Archbishop of York's Spiritual Courts. Early in 1450, troubles began in Kent, which communicated themselves to several southern counties. The rising headed in May by "Jack Cade," which from Kent spread into Surrey and Sussex, seems to have been something very different from a Peasants' War or Jacquerie, or from what Sir Humphrey Stafford in the play denounces as a rabblement of

Rebellious hinds, the filth and scum of Kent,  
Mark'd for the gallows.

Whether Cade himself was or was not a physician by profession, he seems beyond doubt to have been a man of respectable position, who had not improbably seen service in France<sup>1</sup>. That he should have taken the name of Mortimer, alleging his kinship to the Duke of York as the natural son of the last Earl of March, was in the circumstances a very pardonable fiction; though perhaps, as in similar instances of imposture in this age, had his insurrection spread to a great distance from the manor of Cade, the pretence might have assumed bolder proportions<sup>2</sup>. As it was, the Yorkists seem gener-

<sup>1</sup> There seems to be some evidence that Cade may have been a Somerset man, possibly from Bridgwater—the property of Richard Duke of York.

<sup>2</sup> In Act iv, sc. ii, in reply to the accusation that he has been "put up" to his imposture by the Duke of York, Cade says: "He lies, for I invented it myself." Yet he had no reason for laying claim



ally to have identified themselves with Cade's attempt in its earlier stages. But, factious partisanship apart, there were among his followers many men of substance—yeomen and not a few squires; and in Kent and East Sussex the armed rising was organised on the lines of a regular county levy. Its avowed object was not the overthrow of all government, but the establishment of a strong rule, such as would in especial protect the tenure of land against the force, fraud, and chicanery which had long rendered it wholly insecure<sup>1</sup>. The loss of Normandy, which had been the real cause of Suffolk's catastrophe earlier in the year, was, as a matter of fact, only put forward by the insurgents as a secondary grievance; but the very circumstance that they should have shown their concern at what was regarded as a national calamity shows them to have been Englishmen animated by patriotic feelings<sup>2</sup>. The systematic misrepresentation in the play of the general character of "Jack Cade's" rising, which extends to the incidents of his capture, is significant of the spirit of the later Tudor age, when a strong government was strongest in the goodwill of the great body of a self-confident nation.

to much originality on this score. I have often wondered why no attempt has been made to write a comparative history of this class of impostures in the later Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup> No more convincing evidence of the force of this fundamental grievance of the insurgents could be desired than that which is furnished in the *Paston Letters*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ramsay, *u.s.*, vol. II. pp. 125 *seq.*; and see also Pauli, *u.s.*, vol. V. p. 307, where the connexion is noted which is supposed to have existed between the Kentish insurgents and the sailors, whose murder of Suffolk forms one of the most impressive scenes of the play, and one in entire accordance with historical fact.

But how deep the popular discontent had sunk in days of the greatest weakness of Henry VI's government is shown by its having been attributed at Court to the popular preachers—whose voice may be regarded as that of the people itself<sup>1</sup>.

I will conclude these few remarks on the treatment of historical truth in this trilogy by referring to a character in it which has naturally enough been subjected to much indignant censure. The glorious figure of Jeanne Darc, the Pucelle of history, after the most conscientious and painstaking enquiry, stands wholly free from the least of the stains which envy, hatred and malice had left upon it. While at the Court of Charles VII neither the Maid's miraculous achievements nor the ecclesiastical approval which they had earned converted those who looked askance at her to a whole-hearted acceptance of her patriotic mission. The English soldiery whom she drove out of Orleans and who fled panic-stricken before her at Patay regarded her simply as a witch, whose powers were derived direct from the Evil One; nor was it till the moment of her capture that the spell which her prowess and her faith had wrought was broken. A memorandum drawn up some years afterwards by Bedford, whose long labours this simple adversary had undone, attests his conviction that her success, the effects of which he sought in no way to underrate, was due to the lack of sound religious faith in the English soldiery opposed to her in the field, and to the misbelieving doubts caused in them by this limb of

<sup>1</sup> Lord Say, the most prominent victim of the insurrection, and other persons of influence, allowed no one to preach before the King until after submitting to them the proposed sermons.

the Fiend and her use of false enchantments and sorcery<sup>1</sup>. In other words, while this brave and honourable Englishman himself entertained no doubts as to the diabolical origin of the Pucelle and all her doings, he believed that a manly faith in the God who masters devils would have overcome her. But Bedford did not say—though she was in English hands at the time of her imprisonment in the shameful tower which still lifts its head at Rouen, and though the power of England was an accomplice in her trial before a Spiritual Court—what was the nature of the duration and of the process undergone by her. We know that instructions had been given by King Henry that, if she were acquitted, she should be detained in his keeping. And we know what steps were taken to avert that acquittal. In order to do her to death, foul means of every kind were employed by those who had conspired to destroy her—including the perversion of her answers, the insertion in the records of the proceedings of false and brutally injurious statements, the infliction of all the hardships of the dungeon, and the terrors of threatened torture<sup>2</sup>. It was virtually Bedford who sent her to her doom, though French Bishops share the responsibility of her death with the English statesman; Beaufort too is stated to have been present at her execution, and (more dubiously) to have ordered her ashes to be thrown into the Seine. We are naturally apt to overlook the craven desertion of the Pucelle by the King, who owed to her his Crown, in view of the bigoted abhorrence which was the one feeling entertained towards her by Bedford and the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ramsay, *u.s.*, vol. I. p. 398.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Pauli, *u.s.*, vol. V. p. 224.



English Court. But it is impossible to ignore the fact that, though the prejudices of her foes might, in the unhappy episode of the Pucelle in the *First Part of Henry VI* have led them to accept as true the monstrous fiction of her colloquy with the fiends, those who were directly responsible for her doom must have known the abominable accusations suggested in the following scene (derived, as a matter of fact, from the English chroniclers) to be themselves nothing but diabolical lies<sup>1</sup>.

I do not think that it is necessary to touch, except in passing, on a very different aspect of the relations, actual or supposed, to history of the *Henry VI* plays. The late Mr Richard Simpson, a writer whose range of knowledge was only less remarkable than his subtlety of mind, was at the pains of attempting to demonstrate in *Henry VI* a series of veiled allusions to the condition of affairs in England, "when Leicester ruled the roast by ruling the Queen." He makes light of the circumstance that the favourite's death took place in 1588 (citing, as likewise composed after that event, Nashe's Apologue of the Bear in *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication*); while he attaches much weight to the fact that in *Leicester's Commonwealth* the reign of Henry VI is specially noted as similar to that of Elizabeth. But the parallels which he is able to suggest are so remarkably vague and florid, that I do not think it worth while to dwell further upon what seems nothing more than an ingenious paradox<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> It has been well pointed out that, while English writers could not treat her memory very differently without condemning their own countrymen, Monstrelet and the Burgundians regarded her as a political machine.

<sup>2</sup> See Richard Simpson, "On the Politics of Shakspeare's Historical Plays" in *New Shakspeare Society's Transactions*, 1874, pp. 419 seq.

I have come to the conclusion that it would be unwarrantable and against kind, on the present occasion, to follow the example of those writers who have dealt with the three Parts of *Henry VI* mainly from the point of view of the authorship of the several dramas, and have accordingly felt themselves justified in discussing the *Second* and *Third Parts* before dealing, and naturally more briefly, with the *First*. This method was adopted by the late Mr Grant White<sup>1</sup> and his faithful follower Mr G. L. Rives<sup>2</sup>; by Mr Fleay<sup>3</sup>; and by Miss Jane Lee<sup>4</sup>, whose enquiry into the whole subject I have reread with increased admiration of the fullness of her research, as well as of the lucidity of her argument; and I have resorted to it myself in a previous summary introduction to *Henry VI*<sup>5</sup>. But here, where the text of the plays awaits and invites study, the relations of the several portions of that text to one another are best treated as an open question. Moreover, it would be unfair, whatever may be the true version of the process by which these three plays were combined into a single trilogy, to criticise any one part of that trilogy—or indeed any portion of a chronicle history—by itself. Even in the *First Part of Henry VI*, “scrappy” and

<sup>1</sup> *Works of William Shakespeare*. Boston, 1859, vol. VII. See also *Posthumous Studies on Shakespeare*, 1885.

<sup>2</sup> Harness Prize Essay. Cambridge, 1874.

<sup>3</sup> “Who wrote Henry VI?” in *Macmillan's Magazine*, November, 1875. See also “The Marlowe Group of Plays” in Mr Fleay's *Life of Shakespeare*.

<sup>4</sup> “On the Authorship of Parts II and III of Henry VI” (with Supplements). *New Shakspeare Society's Transactions*, 1875-6.

<sup>5</sup> *History of English Dramatic Literature* (2nd ed.), 1899, vol. II. pp. 58-74.

unactable as it may appear when presented on the modern stage, many things manifestly have found a place because of the dramatic requirements of the ensuing *Parts*; and results, however crude, should not be judged out of their connexion with a general design. Even on the assumption that Shakespeare's share in *Part I* was confined to particular scenes or passages inserted by him in other men's handiwork, it must have been his purpose to offer all these three *Parts* as a single theatrical whole, which his fellow-actors who made themselves responsible for the first collected edition of his plays thought themselves justified in designating as his. In other words, he considered the *First Part* indispensable for an intelligent appreciation of the *Second* and *Third*. And indeed, how could it have been otherwise?

Beyond a doubt, the *Henry VI* plays in their entire character belong to that group of Shakespearean Histories which deal with the great dynastic struggle between the Houses of Lancaster and York, rather than to the group, maturer in treatment, which in the chronology of its subjects begins with *King John* and closes with *Henry V*. In the general body of the Shakespearean Drama these two groups may be said to be connected together by *Richard II*. While *Richard III* is, like *Henry VI*, still to all intents the dramatisation (with whatever amount of freedom) of historical narrative, *Richard II* is already, as Grant White describes it, a tragic dramatic poem founded upon historical events; but the emancipation of the dramatic action from the epical matter is complete in *King John*, as it is in *Henry IV* and in *Henry V*. *Henry VIII* stands apart;



though in *Henry VI*<sup>1</sup>, as well as in *Richard III*, the accession of the Tudor dynasty is kept in view as the solution of the country's troubles, the author or authors of *Henry VIII* in their turn have in mind a later consummation. It is likewise undeniable that the connexion between *Henry VI* (or the *First Part* of it) and *Henry V* cannot be regarded as organic. The last six lines of the Epilogue to *Henry V*, which I cite in a note for reference<sup>2</sup>, and whose bearing upon the question of the authorship of *Henry VI* and of the *First Part* of it in particular will be discussed further on, are certainly very far from representing *Henry VI* as merely intended for a continuation of *Henry V*. Nor, in truth, could there easily have been a more extraordinary progress in artistic power and merit than that which the latter play exhibits as compared with the trilogy. And yet the instinct—shall we say the editorial instinct—was a sound one which regarded the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* as incomplete without the *First*. They treat of the collapse of the House of Lancaster and the rise, notwithstanding the catastrophe of its Chief, of the rival House; but this collapse and its consequences were due to a period of weakness, discord, and misgovernment that could not be fully displayed without an exposition of their most

<sup>1</sup> See King Henry's speech to young Richmond in the *Third Part of Henry VI*, Act IV, sc. vi.

<sup>2</sup> "Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crown'd King  
Of France and England, did this king succeed;  
Whose state so many had the managing  
That they lost France, and made his England bleed:  
Which oft our stage hath shown; and, for their sake,  
In your fair minds let this acceptance take."

palpable result, with which the later *Parts* could only incidentally concern themselves—namely, the loss of France. It is true that, in actual history, this loss was not complete till an advanced period of Henry VI's reign; for the end of the Hundred Years' War has to be dated from the final loss of Bordeaux in 1453. But the author, or authors, of *Henry VI* fully availed themselves of the freedom in the manipulation of dates open to them as dramatists, so that the death of the Talbots in Gascony is advanced into *Part I*; and, as a matter of fact, the beginning of the end had arrived when Suffolk sacrificed Maine in order to secure for his master the hand of Margaret of Anjou (1444-45), and a further irretrievable stage in its accomplishment had been the loss of Normandy during the ascendancy of the same Suffolk (1450). The loss of France, so galling to English pride, thus brings home to the spectator or reader more effectively than this could be done in any other way a condition of things in which England itself was to slip out of the hold of the reigning House.

In what there remains for me to state here, I have hardly anything to offer in addition to the summary previously attempted by me after a careful reconsideration of this complex subject, under the light of researches as ample and profound as are to be found in any chapter of Shakespeare criticism. With regard, then, to what seem the most probable conclusions on the question as to the authorship of the *Second* and *Third Parts* of *Henry VI*, and on the antecedent question as to the authorship of the two old plays of which these two *Parts* are now generally held to be enlarged and modified

reproductions, the following may suffice<sup>1</sup>. It has been shown in the preceding pages, more fully than in my own earlier observations on the subject, how very little in the way of actual new matter, as distinct from additions or ornament in the way of expansion and of stylistic improvements, was introduced by the hands to which, on the above assumption, the new versions of the two old plays were due, and how very few corrections of facts, or of the exposition of facts, were made during

<sup>1</sup> The authorities on the subject are in the main the same as those cited in the course of my remarks on *Henry VI* in the second edition of my *History of English Dramatic Literature* (1899), vol. II. pp. 58-74. Since Malone, the late Mr Grant White's "Essay on the Authorship of King Henry the Sixth" (in vol. VII. of his edition of the *Works of William Shakespeare*, Boston, 1859) is the earliest critical contribution of importance to the discussion of the question. His views were put in a shorter form by Mr G. L. Rives in his Harness Prize Essay on the same subject (Cambridge, 1874); and Mr Grant White himself summarised them in his *Studies in Shakespeare* (London, 1885), pp. 21 *seq.* The conclusions stated by Mr F. G. Fleay in his remarkably complete and closely argued paper "Who Wrote Henry VI?" in *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. XXXIII. (November, 1875-April, 1876), were repeated, with some important modifications, in his *Chronicle History of the Life and Works of William Shakespeare* (1886),—a book which, whatever may be the judgment formed as to some of its particular conclusions, holds a permanent place in the history of English literature. Finally, the subject received the most exhaustive treatment which has yet been given to it, or with which it is likely to meet for a long time to come, in Miss Jane Lee's paper "On the Authorship of the Second and Third Parts of Henry VI," in *New Shakspere Society's Transactions* (1876), where, on a suggestion thrown out by Dr Furnivall in the discussion on her paper, she supplements it by a "Table of Shakspeare's and Marlowe's Shares in 2 and 3 Henry VI." Attention may also be directed to Miss Emma Phipson's paper, "The Natural History



the process of "beautifying" the text (if Greene's word may be used without prejudice). Thus the difference between the two pairs of plays reduces itself in the main, though not entirely, to a question of form rather than of matter—in other words, to a question of style (including both diction and versification)—a kind of internal evidence which is of all kinds the most difficult to judge, and which has at times proved a very deceptive one to trust.

The problem of the authorship of the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* cannot, then, be discussed apart from that of the authorship of the two old plays with which they are respectively connected; but, in discussing it, we must perforce begin by going back, more especially as, on the primary question of the respective priority of the two pairs of plays, Mr Fleay is in opposition to the generally received opinion. Malone, Grant White, and Miss Lee, entertain no doubt as to the priority in date of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* to the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*; whereas Mr Fleay advances the theory that the former two plays "consisted of surreptitious frag-

Similes in Henry VI," in the same Society's *Transactions*, 1877-9, and Dr Furnivall's "Table of parallel animal expressions in the Rape of Lucrece," and in "2 and 3 Henry VI," *ib.*, 1875-6; as well as to the late Mr R. Simpson's "The Politics of Shakspeare's Historical Plays" (V. *Henry VI*), *ib.*, 1874, and (though it has no bearing on the question of authorship) to Mr P. A. Daniel's "Time Analysis of the Plots of Shakspeare's Plays" (III), *ib.*, 1877-9. Cf. also Mr A. H. Bullen's Introduction to his *Works of Christopher Marlowe* (1885), vol. I. lxxix-lxxxiii, and Professor Churton Collins' General Introduction to his *Works of Robert Greene* (1905), vol. I. pp. 67-69.

ments taken down in shorthand at theatrical performances, and patched up by some inferior hack, hired to write additions, or by some strutting player, who interpolated bits of sensation for the groundlings." Now, it cannot be denied that among the additional matter to be found in the two *Parts* as compared with the other plays a good deal may be described as "poor"; but, in all ages of the theatre, adapters, especially if their work has to be done in a hurry, are apt not to be over-nice in the choice of their patches. Again, it must be allowed that the notorious passage in Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit* can only be regarded as proving that the *Third Part of Henry VI* was plagiarised from the *True Tragedie*, if we assume as certain that it was a literary plagiarism, not the actor's declamation of other men's compositions, which Greene intended to satirise—and this assumption I agree with Mr Fleay and the late Mr R. Simpson (a sure-footed critic, though one who freely used his imagination) in declining to make. If, on the other hand, the passage does refer to a literary plagiarism, then, if Mr Fleay's theory were correct, Greene would have accused Shakespeare of plagiarising a passage which was itself a plagiarism. Mr Fleay's arguments from the history of theatrical companies and from that of publishers are too full of conjecture to carry conviction; and we are thus reduced to an issue of comparative probabilities. But could anything be more improbable than that the compilers of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* were so unlucky as to miss, or so foolish as to leave out, some of the finest passages in the plays which they conveyed—such, for instance, as two cited by Miss Lee—York's description

of Salisbury in the last scene of the *Second Part*<sup>1</sup>, and passages in his picturesque first speech in Act I, sc. iv, of the *Third Part*<sup>2</sup>. At the same time, some particulars not in *Henry VI* are to be found in the other plays—such as the elaboration of the Duchess of Gloucester's penance and the description of Jack Cade's external appearance in the *Contention*; and I think Miss Lee goes too far in asserting that, "though the author of *Henry VI* might have rejected such things, it is scarcely probable that any copyist would have invented or inserted them." Why not? Still, it cannot be denied that, if Mr Fleay's theory be accepted, we must suppose the compilers of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* to have contrived to reedit their originals in what is beyond all doubt a much cruder and more primitive kind of versification, and a less effective as well as less ornate diction—and to have done this, while the much superior old model was still in the remembrance of playgoers. This seems to me incredible.

It must not, however, be overlooked that the 1619 edition of *The Whole Contention* was intermediate between the quartos of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* of 1600 and the Folio *Henry VI* of 1623; and that, as has been already pointed out, this 1619 edition contains a certain number of modifications of the texts of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*, though these do not approach those of the Folio in amount. Here

<sup>1</sup> "That winter lion, who in rage forgets  
Aged contusions and all brush of time,  
And, like a gallant in the brow of youth,  
Repairs him with occasion."

<sup>2</sup> Including the simile of the swan.



again, in order to avoid Mr Halliwell-Phillipps' conjecture that Shakespeare subjected these texts to a poetical revision, Mr Fleay resorts to another (likewise baseless) conjecture that the publisher Pavier "obtained a few shorthand notes from the theatre, and thus corrected his stolen copy."

Accepting, then, as on the whole more probable, the priority in date of composition of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* to the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*, we come to the further question: who was the author, or who were the authors, of the earlier two plays? Neither Charles Knight nor the German critics, who, as in the case of the authorship of the whole trilogy of *Henry VI*, had the full courage of their belief that Shakespeare was also the author of the early *Sketches*, were able to adduce any evidence in support of this belief beyond that of their internal consciousness. But Ulrici, in his last deliverance on the subject<sup>1</sup>, allowed that "in the earliest impressions these plays have come down to us in a mutilated and corrupt condition"; and Delius, who argued with considerable force for the essentially Shakespearean authorship of the two old plays, cleverly supposed them not only to have been obtained by a piratical publisher from actors, but to have possibly been manipulated by some "sub-ordinate" poet for the purposes of publication<sup>2</sup>.

On the other side, according to which Shakespeare had no share whatever in the composition of these earlier

<sup>1</sup> In *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, vol. I. (1864), p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> See his "Introduction" to the *Third Part of Henry VI* in vol. I of his edition of Shakespeare (Elberfeld, 1872), where he re-prints both the old plays in full.

plays, stands the whole body of English Shakespeare commentators and critics—from Malone and Drake to Hallam, Harness, Collier, and Dyce, and from these to Fleay and Furnivall, and Miss Jane Lee, who by her masterly essay may be said to have made the subject her own. The first argument on this side of the question is the fact that there is no contemporary statement as to any direct connexion between Shakespeare and these two plays; although a line which occurs in one of them was, as has been mentioned, quoted by Greene as early as 1592, and although they were separately printed in 1594 and '95, and reprinted in 1600. Only in 1619, when they were conjointly reprinted three years after Shakespeare's death, were they attributed to him by a piratical publisher.

The second argument is that, in 1595, the *True Tragedie* and, in 1600, the whole *Contention* were printed as acted by Lord Pembroke's men; whereas Shakespeare is not known to have been connected with any company but the Lord Chamberlain's (afterwards the King's)<sup>1</sup>. Neither of these arguments can be regarded as absolutely conclusive. Are they confirmed by internal evidence?

Would the two old plays as they stood have been assigned to Shakespeare as the author of the substantial part of them, had they not been followed by the later

<sup>1</sup> The fact that the *First Part of Henry VI* was possibly acted by Lord Strange's men in 1592, is reconciled by Mr Fleay with the above statement, by means of the assumption that the play had passed to the Lord Chamberlain's servants before 1599, the probable date of the production of *Henry V*, the Epilogue of which seems to allude to it (see above).

and more elaborate version? Do they resemble rough drafts which closely, though not slavishly, follow their main authorities, or are they compositions on which, notwithstanding many crudities of form, the impress of a single mind seems left? Does the general want of regularity in the versification, which in some scenes is exchanged for what Miss Lee aptly calls a "sing-song rhythm," point to unity of workmanship, or rather to the continued labour of the artificer's shop?

A view which would be reconcilable with the belief that it is impossible to accept the two old plays as solely and undividedly Shakespeare's work is taken by Halliwell-Phillipps, Staunton, and more especially by Grant White, while Dr Furnivall extends to it some reluctant favour. Shakespeare, though not sole author of these plays, had a share in their composition. This compromise, or half-way solution, involves the supposition (for nobody, I take it, could contend that he had a share in the *Contention* and *True Tragedie*, but none in the revision resulting in the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*) that he revised work of which he had himself been part author; and it seems futile to seek a way out of this difficulty—not, I think, in itself insuperable—by assuming the existence of some yet earlier plays, out of which Shakespeare and his associates formed the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*. Such plays *may* have existed; but we know nothing whatever of or about their existence. We are thus obliged once more to fall back, as Grant White and others do, upon internal evidence; and to seek for an answer to the question, Is there anything essentially Shakespearean which we find in



the old plays, or which was taken over into *Henry VI* from the old plays?

This brings us at once to the significance of the Jack Cade scenes in the *Contention*—for it will be readily allowed that no other scenes in either of the two plays stand out similarly from the rest<sup>1</sup>. It is the strong impression, if not the absolute conviction, of the foremost of living English poets, whose critical insight adds further authority to his opinion on such a subject, that these scenes are Shakespeare's; in Mr Swinburne's own words<sup>2</sup>, "their forcible realism, their simple life-like humour, can scarcely be ascribed to any hand but Shakespeare's." And Dr Furnivall, steeped like no other English scholar of his eminence in the lore of the matter, avows that he would gladly agree that Shakespeare had no hand in these sketch-plays, "if only he could make up his mind that the first sketch of Cade was not Shakespeare's<sup>3</sup>." Now, I cannot agree with Miss Lee in her view that (supposing the *Contention* to have been written by 1592) Shakespeare was not possessed of sufficient "knowledge of the world and of the things that are in the world" to have enabled him to write these scenes. It seems to me that the "knowledge of the world" displayed in them is that exhibited by many a youth (and Shakespeare would at the time have

<sup>1</sup> I think that Miss Lee's refusal to attach any importance, in this connexion, to the supposed analogy between Biron's speech in *Love's Labour's Lost* (Act iv, sc. iii, l. 290) and York's speech in the *Second Part of Henry VI* (Act i, sc. i, l. 215) will command general assent.

<sup>2</sup> *Fortnightly Review*, January, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1876, p. 283.

been more than a mere youth) who knows something of the people—with a large or a small P—and something of the notions entertained of the people by those towards whom he looks for patronage. And, while I agree in thinking the satire racy and vivacious, and such as might very well have been indited by Shakespeare when a young man not yet capable of such treatment of the same theme as he afterwards, with variations, gave to it in *Julius Cæsar* and in *Coriolanus*—I am not prepared to assert that the humour could have been no other playwright's but his. Although I am fully conscious of the weight of the authority on the opposite side, I feel bound to say that the *vis comica* of these scenes does not strike me as beyond the limit of the powers of Peele<sup>1</sup>; while I think that Greene, who could imitate most things that he chose to imitate, and whose inbred arrogance would have commended to him the spirit of the satire, might quite conceivably have had a hand in making it effective. Nor is an unknown author—such as the writer of the excellent comic scenes in *Sir Thomas More* (1590 c.)—out of the question.

For my part, as I have said before, I find it more difficult to attribute to any known authorship except Shakespeare's certain other passages in the two old plays, in which, in Grant White's felicitously chosen words, "thought, diction, and rhythm sprang up to-

<sup>1</sup> I see from a notice of H. Schütt's edition of "The Life and Death of Jack Straw," in the *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, vol. xxxviii (1902), pp. 283-5, that the authorship of this old play, in which there are some parallels to the *Contention*, has been ascribed to Peele; but I agree with W. Keller, the writer of the notice, that there seems no necessity for associating an important name with it.

gether to flow in a consentaneous stream." The stately opening of the *Contention*; the pathos of the "Duchess" Eleanor in the midst of her shame; the speeches of Warwick in Duke Humphrey's death-scene, and more especially that containing the similes of the dead heifer and the murderous kite; the fury of Suffolk's curse, and the intense reminiscent passion of his farewell to the Queen; or again, in the *True Tragedie*, York's speech about his valorous sons; the fire of invective in the last dialogue between York and the Queen; the "aloofness," to use an ugly but expressive word, of King Henry in the hour of his capture; the downfall of Warwick, as that of the all-overtopping cedar, and the diabolical fury of Gloucester in making an end of the poor King's shadowy life—not one of these passages, and not all of them taken together, seem to me to prove themselves Shakespeare's; but it is difficult to reject as absolutely untenable the belief that he had some concern in them. Unless, therefore, we take refuge in Halliwell-Phillipps' somewhat far-fetched supposition, that passages in the impressions of the two plays dating from 1594 and 1595 were introduced into them from the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*, supposing these to have been already on the stage—we must leave the notion of a cooperation by Shakespeare in the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* in the position of an unproved surmise.

If, then, Shakespeare was not the original author of these two plays, and if the question whether he had any share in them cannot with confidence be answered in the affirmative, can any further hypothesis be successfully maintained as to their authorship? The writers who here alone come into question, because of them



alone plays remain to us which will serve for the purpose of comparison, are Marlowe, Greene, and, perhaps, Peele. Lodge and Nashe cannot definitely be drawn into this enforced competition, because their extant share in the acted drama of the age is so small; and no serious attempt has been made, or indeed practically could have been made, to urge a claim on their behalf. With the mention of Kyd's or one or two other names we should be taken into the region of pure conjecture, into which I for one decline to stray.

Among the dramatists previously mentioned, there is an external probability in favour of Greene, who, according to the testimony of Nashe, wrote "more than four others" for Lord Pembroke's Company, by whom the *True Tragedie* was performed. On the other hand, the fact that Marlowe's *Edward II* was also played by Lord Pembroke's men so far strengthens the possibility that he was concerned in the composition of the two old plays.

In the matter of versification, Miss Lee is no doubt quite right in saying that "Marlowe's versification was at times largely under the influence of that traditional monotony of metrical structure from which Shakespeare was the first to break wholly free." Unless, however, we are to date the two old plays further back than 1592 or the preceding year (which would considerably weaken the force of Greene's allusion in the *Groatsworth*, supposing it to have been to a line in the *True Tragedie*), we might assuredly have expected a more striking agreement in versification as well as in general qualities of style than can be said to be observable between the two old plays and *Edward II*, which was brought out in

1592 (or at the latest in 1593). It is quite true that, if the infrequency of rime in these plays is to be regarded as a sound argument against Shakespeare's authorship of them, it is difficult to see who but Marlowe could at so early a date have written plays with so little rime in them, and dependent, so far as the verse goes, on its own strength. (Of course there are in the two plays many broken lines, for which publishers and players rather than the authors may fairly be held responsible<sup>1</sup>.)

The argument in favour of Marlowe, then, apart from certain parallelisms of expression<sup>2</sup>, practically reduces itself to the proposition that, if Shakespeare did not

<sup>1</sup> Miss Lee cites eight lines or pairs of lines from the *Contention* and *True Tragedie*, repeated or imitated from Marlowe—not of course all of them exact repetitions, but such instances as:

“Even to my death—for I have lived too long.” (*Cont.*)

“Nay, to my death—for too long have I lived.” (*Edward II*, Act v, sc. vi.)

But who could set this down as a proof that it was Marlowe who repeated himself? Shakespeare, we know, occasionally quoted Marlowe. (Peele has, in *Edward I*,

“Haste death—for Joan hath lived too long.”)

<sup>2</sup> Of such Mr Bullen (*Introduction to Marlowe's Works*, vol. i. p. lxxxi) notes two instances—the use of the verb “to mask” in Bullenbrooke's conjuration in the *Contention*:

—“the silence of the Night,

Wherein the Furies maske in hellish troupes”—

which verb occurs several times in *Tamburlaine*, but not in Marlowe's later plays; and the following passage in the speech of Iden when bringing in Cade's head—

“Deep-trenched furrows in his frowning brow”—

as compared with the *Second Part of Tamburlaine*, Act I, sc. iii:

“But in the furrows of his frowning brow.”

write certain scenes in the two old plays, there was no contemporary dramatist sufficiently gifted to have written them but Marlowe. As such Miss Lee indicates (if my counting be correct) the scene of Duke Humphrey's death in the *Contention* (from Suffolk's re-entrance) and Clifford's slaughter of young Rutland in the *True Tragedie*. Allowing that, at the time, Marlowe stood forth among his contemporaries, including Shakespeare, like no other writer, the marks of his genius discernible in such scenes as these are not to my mind sufficiently specific to be convincing. And I cannot avow myself very forcibly struck by the resemblances of thought to Marlowe perceptible in the old plays: in the fury of the contending nobles there is nothing specially characteristic of him; the mild despondency of Henry VI may be in some measure like that of Mycetes in *Tamburlaine*, and like that of Edward II, but it is far less rough-edged than the former, and on the other hand far less elaborated than the latter.

For the claim put forward on behalf of Greene there is, cumulatively, more to urge. Before 1592, as Mr Churton Collins has pointed out<sup>1</sup>, Greene's contemporaries and friends are silent about his work as a playwright, and in his own writings no mention is made of his plays. Moreover, Nashe, in his address prefixed to Greene's *Menaphon*, though he manifestly intended to pour contempt upon Marlowe and his associates (Miss Lee thinks, upon Kyd), as contrasted with Greene, says nothing about any plays written by the latter. Thus, it is quite possible that he may have been concerned in a greater or less measure with more plays than bear his

<sup>1</sup> "Introduction" to Greene's *Dramatic Works*, vol. I. pp. 67-9.



name; and his facility as a playwright was, as we have seen, afterwards specially attested by Nashe, and, as a matter of fact, only formed part of a general facility almost unparalleled, and duly held up to scorn by such an antagonist as Gabriel Harvey. The difficulty of assuming Greene's cooperation in the two old plays is increased rather than diminished by assuming Marlowe's; for there is no proof of their having worked together as dramatists; and, whether or not in the *Groatsworth* Greene complained of literary plagiarism of himself and Marlowe, he certainly says nothing in that tract as to their having been associated as playwrights. Thus we have to fall back upon style, versification, and incidental detail. It cannot be denied that resemblances to the diction and versification of Greene are to be found in the two old plays, though, as I have remarked elsewhere, it is somewhat suspicious to find them to be largely taken from *Greene the Pinner of Wakefield*, a play of which Greene's authorship cannot yet be said to have been with certainty established. There might also seem some force in the fact of the repeated use in the two plays of the obsolete "for to" = to<sup>1</sup>, which Miss Lee has noted as occurring five times in the *Contention* (and, curiously, twice in that bit of the Incantation scene which is to be found only in that old play) and four times in the *True Tragedie*; whereas Shakespeare uses the form only a few—Churton Collins says, eight—times. But as it also occurs now and then in Marlowe, and more often in Peele's *Edward I* than either in the *Contention* or the *True Tragedie*, this may be said to prove too much. Miss Lee mentions

<sup>1</sup> E.g. "And conjure them for to obey my will."

certain resemblances of verbal expression, which she judiciously herself describes as not decisive, and which, as their occurrence is for the most part isolated, I should be inclined to regard as fortuitous. The total number of lines in the two old plays which closely resemble others in plays undoubtedly by Greene is, in any case, smaller than that of those which resemble lines in Marlowe. It is certainly odd that the name of "mightie Abradas, the great Masadonian Pyrate" (*Contention*) who in the *Second Part of Henry VI*, Act IV, sc. i, l. 108, is changed into "Bargulus the strong Illyrian pirate" should not be known to recur anywhere else in English literature except in a passage of Greene's *Penelope's Web*. It is also impossible, as Miss Lee points out, to avoid being struck by the number of proverbial expressions which occur in the two old plays, and which help to give to them and to *Henry VI*, as a whole, a certain sententious colouring: these are more in Greene's manner—as that of the conscious trained man of letters—than in that of perhaps any of his contemporaries. The abundant classical allusions in these plays I am not prepared to regard as speaking for Greene rather than for Marlowe. The occasional introduction of fragments of Latin into the dialogue<sup>1</sup> is, I believe, more in Marlowe's than in Greene's way; but it is not altogether out of Shakespeare's.

Thus I conclude—if it be a conclusion—that Marlowe and Greene very possibly, and Greene probably, had a share in the authorship of the two old plays, and that

<sup>1</sup> Cf. in Part II, Act I, sc. iv, l. 22: "*adsum*"; *ib.*, l. 61 "*aio te*," etc.; Act II, sc. i, l. 53: "*nosce teipsum*"; Act IV, sc. vii, l. 49: "*bona terra*"; and in Part III, Act I, sc. iii, l. 48: "*Dii faciant*," etc.

Peele, who was certainly possessed of a racy vein of humour, as shown in his *Old Wives' Tale*, as well as in his *Edward I*, may conceivably likewise have had some concern in them. But, if I am asked to go further, and to seek (as I could in no case successfully do) to emulate Miss Lee in laying down, with a modesty of manner reminding one of the blandness with which, of old, certain proposals used to be brought forward for reconstructing the Old Testament, a choristic scheme separating the portions of the plays in question written by Marlowe from those written by Greene—the imitative Greene—my courage fails me. I demur to the assumption, to begin with, that, since the comic scenes in the two old plays could not be by Marlowe, they must be by Greene, whom Chettle, in his *Kind Hart's Dreame*, averred to have been, “to no man’s disgrace be it intended, the only Comedian, of a vulgar writer in this country.” For Chettle may not have been carried away by the humours of the Armourer and his man, or by the grim fun of the Cade scenes; and the Cade scenes, in whose-soever manner they may be, are not in Greene’s. I demur to the distribution of the tragic scenes between Marlowe and Peele, because of more or less superficial resemblances—“by Marlowe were certainly the Cardinal’s death, the parting of Suffolk and Margaret.” Or again—Marlowe took charge of Henry VI, because he resembles Mycetes and Edward II, and Greene of Edward IV, whom we may compare with James IV! Queen Margaret’s words towards the close, it is more pointedly noted, bear some resemblance to Queen Elinor’s dying speeches in *Edward I*. Mr Grant White held that Shakespeare had undertaken Clifford and



Warwick (curious, if so, that, as a Warwickshire man he should have been imperfectly informed as to the identity of the Earl!) and Mr Rives faithfully followed suit in supposing the Queen's character to be of Shakespeare's devising. It seems to matter little that, in the former two instances, the characters were, so to speak, transferred bodily into *Henry VI*, while the Queen's part was extended almost throughout. The critic's consciousness sufficed him.

And so, I fear, the dubious question of the authorship of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie* must be left only half-answered. We certainly stand on firmer ground in discussing the authorship of the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* themselves. For, as the figures show, of which the result was stated above, something between one-third and one-half of the whole number of lines in these *Second* and *Third Parts* were added to the text of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*. According to Grant White's calculation, 1479 lines were taken over from the 3057 of the *Contention*, and the still larger proportion of 1931 from the 2877 lines of the *True Tragedie*. It is, therefore, of nearly one-half of the *Second* and *Third Parts*, taken together, that the authorship is in question. On the other hand, it has been seen that, in the conduct of the action, *Part II* and the first three acts of *Part III* exhibit no considerable variation from the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*; and in the course of this Introduction it has been demonstrated, I think for the first time, how consistently as a whole, though with certain deviations of detail, the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* follow, step by step, and stage by stage, the authorities of which the two old plays

accepted the guidance. Yet it cannot be denied that the revision or reediting of the old plays, and their transformation into the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*, were carried out on a scale of elaborateness and thoroughness to which it would be difficult to find a parallel in dramatic or in any other kind of imaginative literature, unless in instances where a single mind has, like Goethe's in his *Faust*, evolved a masterpiece of its maturity out of fragmentary beginnings dating from its youth. The additions, omissions, and alterations which, in the case of the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* are generally improvements, amount to a renewal of the whole; though already Malone pointed out that the reviser or revisers proved true to their character as such by showing themselves to be not infallible, and indulging in transpositions and repetitions which occasionally, after the manner of revisions not carried through with perfect completeness and consistency, wear the aspect of patchwork. We have, therefore, in concluding this lengthy disquisition, to ask who was the agent, or who were the agents, that converted the two old plays into dramatic works so notably superior in general proportion and in consequent effectiveness of form, as well as in abundance of striking detail.

Shakespeare would in any case be entitled to "preferential" consideration on this head; since even in our own day the authority of the First Folio is not to be lightly set aside. And, as I think we are coming to recognise more clearly than ever, the objections against extruding from such a canon any work which has been included, and has long remained included in it, are particularly strong where the canon itself, whatever

its origin, has received a national acceptance. Indeed, in the present instance, no play has been excluded from the Shakespearean canon with a predominant assent of critics, with the sole exception of *Titus Andronicus*. If, in the last two lines of the passage already cited from the Epilogue to *Henry V*—

Which oft our stage has shown; and for their sake

In your fair minds let this acceptance take—

the words “for their sake” be considered to refer to at least two plays previously performed with success on the same stage as *Henry V*, there can be no reasonable doubt but that the three *Parts of Henry VI* are in question. No doubt it would be strange that Shakespeare should describe as “our stage” a theatre other than the only one with which he is known to have been connected; but, if he was actually concerned with the plays themselves, the possessive pronoun might be held justifiable. And it is surely hypercritical to assert that the loss of France is really dealt with in *Part I*; for *Part II* at its opening is still concerned with the loss of Anjou and Maine, and, even in *Part III*, the consequences of the ill-management of the relations between England and France may be said to be still in progress; while Mr Fleay's notion seems far-fetched, that the *their* in the penultimate line of the Epilogue refers to the *they* of the preceding line—i.e. to the personages who mis-managed the relations in question, and hence to the actors who represented those personages in *Henry VI* (only). But I do not think that the evidence of this passage, somewhat obscure as it is, can be allowed to count for much. On the other side we have the fact that Francis Meres, in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598), takes



no notice of *Henry VI*—an omission which must go for what it is worth, but cannot be held to clinch the matter. Thus the external evidence as to Shakespeare's authorship of the *Second* and *Third Parts* is, apart from the fact of their inclusion in the First Folio, unsatisfactory.

The internal evidence has been marshalled very effectively by Miss Jane Lee, and is worth restating, since, in my opinion at all events, its cumulative probability renders it virtually irresistible. In the first place, as to versification, she seems to me justified in disregarding the argument against Shakespeare's participation in these plays which have little rime, drawn from the fact that the earliest plays indisputably his (*The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, etc.) have much; for these were not, as the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* are generally held to have been, founded on plays which themselves had little rime. On the other hand, Miss Lee points to things in the vocabulary of these plays which are distinctly Shakespearean—e.g. the use of the verb "to budge," of the retreat of an army; the verb "misthink"; the picturesque descriptive touch "blowing of his nails" (*Third Part*, Act II, sc. v, l. 3), which recurs in a song in *Love's Labour's Lost*; and the occurrence of certain specially Shakespearean compounds.

But these are trifles<sup>1</sup>. The changes from the text

<sup>1</sup> I may take this opportunity of referring to a curious conjecture which has been advanced, but which will hardly carry conviction on the evidence furnished—viz., the unusual similes to be found in these plays from natural history and from the life and habits of animals—that an unknown writer who "specialised" in this direction ("a

of the earlier plays are, at times, singularly Shakespearean in their sudden revelation of the depths of human nature—so in the Duchess Eleanor's—

Go, lead the way—I long to see my prison—

(*Second Part*, Act II, last line); or in their lifelike truthfulness, such as the few lines of talk between the murderers at the opening of Act III, sc. ii. It is just in such things as this, and in a vividness of characterisation—for which neither the fiery passion of Marlowe (who except in *Edward II* seems almost to go out of

farmyard and menagerie man," as Dr Furnivall humorously called him) had a hand in them. According to Miss Emma Phipson, who investigated the subject with remarkable assiduity, the number of natural history similes in the *Second Part* amounts to 49, and that in the *Third Part* to 53. They are, partly, the result of direct observation (or the assumption of it) of natural life in the country, partly artificial figures, borrowed from writers on natural (as it has wittily been termed, "unnatural natural") history, such above all as that which *Euphues* rendered fashionable and popular—and, mainly if not entirely, derived by them from unscrupulously imaginative or reproductive writers of antiquity. Miss Phipson was at the pains of ascertaining that, in the case of the dramatists supposed, with more or less reason, to have contributed to the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*, Peele's animal similes are not very numerous, and are mostly of the artificial kind; Greene's (it will be remembered that he continued *Euphues*) also generally artificial, but of a more poetical kind than Peele's—and I may add that, with all his affectations, there are indications in Greene of a true appreciation of the charms of the country. He was very fond of introducing natural history similes into his writing; and Miss Lee aptly quotes Nashe in his *Have with ye to Saffron Walden*, where, indignant at having been charged with imitating Greene, he exclaims: "Did I ever write of coney-catching? stufft my stile with hearbs and stones?...if not, how then did I imitate him?" The animal similes occurring in Marlowe, who was

the way of drawing character) nor the undeniable superficiality of Greene fitted the one or the other of them—that Shakespeare is so indescribably himself. And, although *Part III* adheres more closely to the play on which it is founded than *Part II*, and this very fact may account for the comparative fewness of the actual resemblances to Shakespeare contained in *Part III*, yet it is from this later play, above all—the transition play proper—that is derived what seems to me one of the very strongest arguments in favour of the Shakespearean authorship of both *Parts*. This con-

town-bred and lived in towns all his life, are scanty and euphuistic. Shakespeare, as we know and Mr Rushton and others have shown, was largely indebted to *Euphues* as a writer, but he was also deeply indebted to his knowledge and observation of country life; he loved birds both as a poet and from his familiarity with them (see J. E. Hasting's *Ornithology of Shakespeare*, 1871); and he is full of allusions to country sports (except fishing), and to that of hawking in particular, to which Miss Phipson has not found a single allusion in Peele, Greene, or Marlowe. The *Contention* contains some references to the use of birdlime; but the passage with which the first scene of Act II of the *Second Part of Henry VI* opens contains technical hawking terms not to be found in the corresponding passages of the *Contention*. Speaking generally, though in *Henry VI* (so notably in scenes i and ii of Act III of *Part II*) the natural history similes for the most part lie close together; more than half of them are also to be found (with certain modifications) in the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*. The curious epithet (probably only an *epitheton ornans*), "empty" eagle, which occurs once in each *Part*, is also found in Greene. Miss Phipson is of opinion that the similes, as they stand in the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*, give the impression of being Shakespeare's. See also as to parallel expressions of the same kind in *Parts II* and *III* of *Henry VI*, and in *The Rape of Lucrece*, the list given by Dr Furnivall in the *New Shakspere Society's Transactions*, 1876, pp. 312-13.



sists in the unity of design between *Henry VI* and *Richard III* and in their exactly parallel use of the same historical sources—a twofold fact which must be regarded as convincing, unless, of course, we are again to resort to paradox and to treat the Richard of both *Henry VI* and *Richard III* not as Shakespeare's creation, but as his revision of Marlowe's.

For myself, a fresh reconsideration of the question has only served to confirm me in my previous conclusion that Shakespeare's participation in the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*, to which they owe the note of his genius as a possession forever, may be regarded as established; nor do I think that the work so admirably done by Miss Jane Lee needs, in this respect, to be done over again. But I am not so well satisfied that Marlowe had a share with Shakespeare in the transformation of the earlier two plays into the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*. This is the last in the series of Miss Lee's conclusions, and she has supplemented it by elaborate Tables in which she undertakes to distinguish, scene upon scene, and often part of scene upon part of scene, the passages which in her opinion represent Shakespeare's revisions of Marlowe, of Marlowe and Greene, and of Greene only; as well as the much smaller number in which she holds Marlowe to have been the reviser, either alone or in company with Shakespeare, of the work of others or of himself. She avoids the supreme audacity of suggesting that any other writer, even Marlowe, in any instance, revised Shakespeare, although Marlowe, it must be remembered, was at the time the more celebrated playwright of the pair. I confess that into these final flights I cannot venture to

follow Miss Lee; and I cannot suppress a regret that she should have essayed them, though it is a glorious vicinity which, if such be the case, has "sear'd her wings." For what evidence have we to allow us to hazard such a hypothesis as a cooperation between genius and genius, when we know absolutely nothing of the conditions under which it might have been exercised? It may, no doubt, be conjectured that the relations between Shakespeare and Marlowe were friendly—at least in so far that Shakespeare, we know, admired his brilliant fellow-writer; and there are a few passages in the plays which, unless we are to suppose that Marlowe imitated them, are directly taken from him<sup>1</sup>. But does this in any way prove them to have been inserted by himself? And, though Mr Fleay's attribution to Marlowe's genius of scenes which seem to have a touch of it, such as those which make up Act III of *Part II* together with the first scene of Act IV, is seductive, Miss Lee cannot refrain from assuming here the presence of Shakespeare's touch—the power of passion which he shared with Marlowe is tempered by a gnomic wisdom which belonged to Shakespeare alone. From Miss Lee's unproved theory of a revision by both poets,

- <sup>1</sup> "These arms of mine shall be thy winding-sheet;  
My heart, sweet boy, shall be thy sepulchre."

(*Third Part*, Act II, sc. v, l. 114; cf. *The Jew of Malta*, sc. ii.)

The phrase "He wears a duke's revenue on his back" (in the *Second Part*, Act I, sc. iii, l. 78) recurs with "lord's" instead of "duke's" in *Edward II* (Act I, sc. iv); and the less characteristic

"And we are graced with fruits of victory"

occurs, in just the same words, both in the *Third Part* (Act V, sc. iii, l. 1), and in the *Massacre of Paris* (Act II, sc. vi).

few, I think, will be prepared to go on to the view of Mr Fleay, who excludes Shakespeare from any substantial share in the revision, and regards the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*, together with *Richard III*, in its unrevised form, as essentially Peele's work. He argues that *Richard III*, by its form of verse, by the absence from it of classical quotations, and in other respects, differs from *Henry VI*; that there are historical mistakes in *Henry VI* which do not occur in *Richard III* (e.g. in the *Third Part* the Prince of Wales marries Anne, who is called Warwick's eldest daughter, whereas in *Richard III* she is rightly called his youngest). These discrepancies, he thinks, show that there were different supervisors; and he accordingly comes to the conclusion that Peele at his death (before 1598) left behind him the unfinished trilogy of *Richard III* (consisting of the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* and of *Richard III*); that Shakespeare finished the former by adding the three battle-scenes (ii, iii, iv) of Act v of the *Third Part*; and that it was produced by the Lord Chamberlain's Company. Marlowe, he considers, and Marlowe alone, had revised the whole *Contention*, just as Shakespeare revised the *First Part of Henry VI*, adding to Peele's part of the work. Grant White has pointed out that in *Richard III* ("which...although it is the greatest favourite of all his histories on the stage, is yet the poorest and thinnest in thought, the least harmonious in rhythm—in a word, the least Shakespearean of them all") much is to be found that resembles Marlowe and Peele, especially the latter. We may readily agree that, when writing *Richard III*, Shakespeare had not yet found his most truly original style and manner, of



which the first full exemplification is to be found in *Richard II*; his processes were still in a large measure imitative; but it is a long step from this—and a step which I for one decline to take—to argue that *Richard III* was not essentially his own handiwork.

I am willing, as I stated above, to allow it to be quite possible that Marlowe and Greene, the latter more especially, contributed to the *Contention* and the *True Tragedie*, and that Peele may, conceivably, also have had a hand in them. But, while I see no reason for attributing the conception of Richard of Gloucester to Peele—from whose hand we have no character approaching this in dramatic force—I am less disposed than I formerly was to consider a revision by or with the cooperation of Marlowe to be an assumption necessary in order to account for the revision of the two old plays which transformed them into the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*. This assumption implies another to which I cannot bring myself to assent, viz., that Shakespeare's 'prentice hand, fortified by his consciousness of what was to follow—*Richard III*—was unequal to the task of the revision of the two old plays, if (as we certainly cannot prove) this task was imposed upon him. The belief that Shakespeare, although a beginner, was capable of accomplishing it, by no means contradicts the probability that a strong influence was exercised upon Shakespeare as the reviser of the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI*, and as the writer of *Richard III*, by Marlowe, and also by Peele. In the former case, the probability is indeed to all intents and purposes a certainty. Marlowe—the one great imaginative poet among the predecessors of Shakespeare—the one

dramatic poet in whom there burnt the fire of passion, and whose thoughts were winged with aspirations that bade them soar into the infinite—the one Promethean soul in face of an Olympus of limited ambitions—how could such a writer have left unaffected and uninfluenced the most receptive, the most intelligent, the most sympathetic of his younger contemporaries? Or was Shakespeare not great enough to absorb into his creative activity the spirit of Marlowe—as Goethe in his period of Storm and Stress absorbed into his genius the spirit—far less powerful than Marlowe's—of a Klinger or a Lenz? That is the question which those who, like myself, are unwilling to assume a direct cooperation of Marlowe with Shakespeare in this “revision” are unwilling to answer by a timid negative. For my part, I am still unable to see why the *Second* and *Third Parts of Henry VI* are not, together with the *First*, to be legitimately included, as Hemynge and Condell included them, among the works of Shakespeare—and this in a sense in which they could be included among the works of no other English dramatist.

## 10. SHAKESPEARE AND THE MAKERS OF VIRGINIA

(*The British Academy Shakespeare Lecture*, July 3rd, 1919<sup>1</sup>.)

WHEN, Mr President, the Council of the British Academy honoured me with an invitation to deliver this year's Shakespeare Lecture before an audience on whose indulgence I knew I could safely count, and to deliver it on this day, it was not only the proximity of dates which almost inevitably turned my thoughts concerning a choice of subject for my address in a particular direction. I do not know that any recent event in the history of this Academy has surpassed in its significance the kindly "interchange of notes," early in the present year, between our own and the American Sister-institution, or that a more legitimate interpretation could be put upon this memorable proceeding than that suggested, Mr President, in a sentence of your own reply to the pledge of friendship conveyed to us by the American Academy: "Comradeship in the cause of high ideals must be the best bond of union between nations; and it would be a declension from that high ideal if we allowed disunion ever again to arise between the English-speaking nations."

Nor—for the months speed quickly—is it very long since, in the friendly Hall<sup>2</sup> where I am speaking, and

<sup>1</sup> *The British Academy Annual Shakespeare Lecture*, 1919. *Shakespeare and the Makers of Virginia*. Published for the British Academy, 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Of King's College, London.



thanks, I may venture to say to the inspiration of one of its familiars, the Hon. Secretary of this Academy<sup>1</sup>—which has quite recently felt itself honoured by the honour conferred on him by the King—a public meeting applied this axiom in a way specially akin to the purpose of our Annual Shakespeare Lecture. The immediate object of that meeting was the institution of an Annual Shakespeare Day, to be kept as a holiday by all and more especially by the young, both at home and in North America; and the proposal was supported by the presence and the eloquent pleading of the late Dr Page, then the United States Ambassador to this country, and the descendant of a family of historic renown in Virginia. To Dr Page, a copy of the Second Folio was, as many of you are aware, presented as a memorial of the occasion, and at the same time as a token of the widespread admiration and regard entertained for the public services and the personal qualities of the distinguished diplomatist and man of letters whom we have since lost. Through the munificence of Sir Charles Wakefield, our Academy has since, as has been stated to you this afternoon, been enabled to commemorate the Raleigh Tercentenary by administering a Fund singularly adapted for advancing the cooperation of American and English historical scholarship.

One other recent manifestation of this sense of international unity I venture to note, before entering on my immediate theme, to which it seems peculiarly germane. In 1917, the Royal Historical Society published a volume of quite unusual interest, in-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Sir Israel Gollancz, Litt.D.

troduced by a weighty preface from the hand of our honoured late President, Viscount Bryce, and containing a series of essays by historical scholars of high eminence, commemorating, on the occasion of its seven-hundredth anniversary, in 1915, the grant of our great English Charter at Runnymede. None of these essays, I think, surpassed in value that by a distinguished American jurist, now a member of our Cambridge Professorial body (Dr H. D. Hazeltine), who in this paper showed with perfect clearness how "the growth of the colonies in America meant, from the very beginning, the extension of English institutions and laws to these little Englands across the sea. To their birthright of the English traditions of the sixteenth and earlier centuries was now added the gift of the constitutional and legal principles established in seventeenth-century England." Thus it came to pass—and this is a feature of English colonial life without a parallel in the history of modern colonisation—that "in the political and constitutional controversy of the colonial period" (of American history) "the rights of the colonists as Englishmen played a vitally important part"; "Magna Carta and other English statutory guarantees of the subject were relied upon as the source of political privilege and civil right"; and, as Professor Hazeltine told a Cambridge audience last summer, "from the very beginning of effective colonization in the early seventeenth century, Englishmen in America ...regarded the English Common Law as their own birthright." Thus, "this incorporation of the English conception of law into colonial thought and practice constitutes one of the most fundamental of all the

influences of England upon America<sup>1</sup>." A genuine and vital connexion of this kind illustrates with supreme force the truth that nations may be united by something beyond their material interests, and goes far to justify us, while deprecating, with Imogen<sup>2</sup>, any desire to exclude other friendly nations from their place in the sun, in resolving that close to our own place there shall be and remain that of a people akin to us, not only in blood but in some of the most enduring traditions of our national life.

The critically decisive period of Anglo-American colonisation, in which, after a series of earlier attempts had been made and had failed, the first enduring effort to plant what was an English political community as well as a trade-settlement on American soil was, notwithstanding many vicissitudes, at last crowned with success, covers, without much stretch of reckoning, the maturer years of England's and the world's greatest dramatic poet. You will not, I think, object to counting those years as from the close of the 16th century to 1616. While, therefore, we may fairly, with Professor Hazeltine, regard the grant of the first Virginia Charter in 1606 as marking the real beginning of English settlement in America, and the opening of a new era in the history of colonisation in general, we may actually, in this month of July 1919, celebrate the Tercentenary of the first meeting of the first Virginian, and the first Colonial, representative Legislative Assembly. In other words, the conceptions which, after a long experience

<sup>1</sup> See the essay on "English Influence on American Ideals of Justice and Liberty" in *The America of To-day* (Cambridge, 1919).

<sup>2</sup> *Cymbeline*, Act III, sc. iv. I do not know why the origin of the figure should have repeatedly been thought to be found in Pascal.



of tests and trials, have endured as the foundations of Anglo-American political life, were developed (I do not say first formed) and put into practice (I do not say fully carried out) by men who were not only compatriots of Shakespeare, but contemporaries of his manhood. In what measure and with what results he was brought into contact with these ideas, must be questions requiring careful consideration; but we shall enter upon this with the conviction that one of the most distinctive elements in his genius was his power of observing the mental and moral, as well as the material, phenomena of the world around him, while another was the power of giving expression, clear and full, to the results of such observation. Whether, in this instance, he was in sympathy with them is a further question; but, even if he consciously stood aside or remained detached from them, that fact, could it be established, would be neither without interest nor without significance.

Those who think with me on these heads will, if they have not already done so, not fail to take up with something more than curiosity, a small volume by Professor C. M. Gayley, of the University of California, bearing the sufficiently comprehensive title of *Shakespeare and the Founders of Liberty in America*. The book was published at New York in 1917, and was therefore one which the recent War and its preoccupations made it necessary for most of us to lay aside, so that in its reannouncement it appeals to us with a fresh attractiveness. Professor Gayley is one of those American scholars who at one time outvied, and still keep pace with, our own in the assiduous enthusiasm with which they have sought to rivet one of the strongest of the bonds

between the old country and the new—the study of our common literature and language; and his labours (with which he has done some workers on our side the honour of occasionally associating us) are honourably known to all who prize the literary masterpieces of our race. His present essay was, therefore, sure of a welcome here, while he will find few of us to differ from his general conclusions, as unfolded in his concluding chapter: that, whatever debt the North American Colonies may have incurred elsewhere in the achievement of their destinies, the seed of the principles which assured their political freedom was sown at home in England. But, while we shall readily accept the view that the influence of political ideas familiar, in essence as in germ, to the later years of Elizabeth and the early Stewart age, had an important liberating effect upon early Anglo-American political life, we must proceed more cautiously with regard to the special thesis which this work was written to uphold. Its purport is, in brief, that these political ideas, after finding their most pregnant expression in the masterpiece of Hooker, were, largely by his teaching, infused into the minds of a group of English politicians whom Mr Gayley—I confess I cannot discover on what authority—calls “the Patriots,” but who may be more safely described as constituting the Opposition during the reign of our first Stewart King, and who were eminently instrumental in “making” Virginia, by securing to the colony to which that name was ultimately restricted a broad basis of political life. This demonstration is coupled—and here we reach the point in the argument which seems to me to render it specially suitable for your con-

sideration to-day—with a further attempt to show that these ideas and principles, largely in consequence of Shakespeare's personal relations with the politicians in question (or some of them), found their way into his own mind and writings.

It may be well, before discussing these twin propositions, to remind you of certain pertinent facts in the early history of the Company with some of whose leading members and their friends we are concerned. In what follows, full advantage has been taken of the indefatigable labours of Mr Alexander Brown, upon which, indeed, the historical data of Mr Gayley's volume are avowedly based. His *Genesis of the United States*, accompanied by an extremely useful biographical appendix, is a *magnum opus* of its kind, and forms a tribute of rare completeness to the heroes of early Virginian history. For authentic information as to the proceedings of the Virginia Company during the eventful eighteen years of its chartered life, divided into the Guelf and Ghibelline periods of the Thomas Smith and the Sandys-Southampton *régimes*, the historical student will turn to the *Records* of the Company, sumptuously edited from the manuscript in the Library of Congress, which they had reached by a strange Odyssey, after being transcribed in just apprehension of the danger menacing them by the far-sighted care of Nicholas Ferrar; the "Ferrar papers" at Magdalene College, Cambridge; and the "Manchester" papers in the Public Record Office. Miss Kingsbury's monumental edition is prefaced by Professor Osgood, whose own *American Colonies in the Seventeenth Century* may claim to be considered a standard work in the entire subject of which my



address to-night only touches a section ; while Professor Newton's admirably written *Colonising Activities of the English Puritans* treats its final phase (the history of the Providence Company). On the other hand, Professor W. R. Scott's remarkable work on *British Joint Stock Companies*, though ranging over a far wider field than we have under our survey on the present occasion, and conducting an exceedingly complex enquiry with close attention to the varying conditions of its several parts, discusses that section of it which concerns the Virginia Company with masterly conciseness, and may serve as a welcome guide through examples of more discursive methods of treatment. As to the general bearing of this chapter of Colonial upon the progress of English political life in general, Gardiner's standard work, to which I like to appeal in these walls, and which has recently met the test of a searching critical estimate from an able American pen, is not likely to be left neglected.

I pass by, as of no immediate significance for our theme, the earlier projects for, and attempts at, American Colonisation, which, from Humphrey Gilbert's Limehouse schemes onwards, were inextricably mixed up with privateering designs against the Spaniards, and, in one instance at all events, with a devout project of "planting religion beyond the seas." After the tragic breakdown of Raleigh's more systematic scheme, in 1587, in which Thomas Smith, afterwards Treasurer of the London Virginian Company, had a share (you may peradventure hear more of these designs when Lord Bryce favours us with the Inaugural Raleigh Lecture in the autumn<sup>1</sup>) there was a pause and, when you

<sup>1</sup> Since published by the Academy.

call to mind that the Armada sailed in 1588, this is not surprising. Thus it was not till 1602 that a new series of voyages of "discovery" directed themselves towards the northern coasts of what was then called Virginia—commanded successively by Bartholomew Gisnold, Martin Pring, and George Weymouth. Raleigh (who did not regard his rights under the Charter which he had obtained in 1584 as extinct) approved of some, and even ventured a ship in one, of them; but the whole series was financed by the Earl of Southampton, whose name thus early connects itself with the history of the New World, and a syndicate of other distinguished personages, with most of whom we shall meet again. The last of these discoverers, George Weymouth, returned home in July 1605, bringing with him five native Indians, "which accident," according to Sir Ferdinando Gorges—in his day both a participant in Raleigh's Guiana Expedition and a Cavalier in the Great Civil War—"must be acknowledged the means, under God, of putting on foot and giving life to our plantation." (Ever since the sojourn in England—some eleven years later—of poor Pokahontas, the stimulus of setting eyes upon a native, even if below the rank of a Princess, has proved a distinct aid to colonising enterprise.) More to the point, however, is the remark of the same gallant adventurer that the Peace with Spain, concluded in the year 1604, was "the means"—as he again piously phrases it, "under God"—of making possible an English settlement of which Spain still, for many a long day, contested the sovereignty. You know, of course, in what capacity Shakespeare was concerned in the Peace Conference which preceded the ratification of the

Treaty. He belonged to the retinue ordered to wait upon the Spanish Plenipotentiary, the Constable of Castile, in one of the rooms occupied by whom in Somerset House King James had caused to be affixed, for the benefit no doubt of the Ambassador rather than of his attendants, a tablet inscribed *Beati pacifici*—upon which device we are not, as the French Ambassador seems to have thought himself, called upon to put any ulterior interpretation. The Spaniards signed, but the state of Anglo-Spanish relations overseas survived to trouble the soul of Oliver Cromwell<sup>1</sup>.

The period was already, in England, one of colonising efforts which sought to ensure lasting success by means of an organisation connecting them directly with the support and authority of the Crown. The first Charter for Virginia—of which the date is 1606, six years after that of the first Charter of the great East India Company—was in part the work of the Attorney-General, Sir Edward Coke; but, as a whole, it seems to

<sup>1</sup> Mention of the attendance of Shakespeare's Company as Grooms of the Chamber at Somerset House was first made by Mr J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps in the *Athenæum* (July 8, 1871), and then in his *Outlines* (first printed 1881). The authenticating statement had been lost, but it was afterwards found in the Accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber, by Mrs Stopes and Mr Ernest Law, in each case independently. Mrs Stopes first published the discovery in a letter to the *Athenæum*, March 12, 1910 (reprinted in her *Shakespeare's Industry* (1916), pp. 275-6). Mr Law had discovered the source in July, 1907, but had not published it before the appearance of his *Shakespeare as a Groom of the Chamber* in 1910, after the date of Mrs Stopes's letter. As to the Conference, see also Mr Law's letter to *The Sphere*, May 3, 1913. He informs me that the *Beati pacifici* tablet is still preserved in an old house at Rowsley, Derbyshire.



have been drafted by Chief Justice Sir John Popham, who plays a most conspicuous part in the history of the Virginia Company, and whose name is one of those connecting its annals with those of the Middle Temple, of which he was long Treasurer. "In this famous document," in Professor Hazeltine's words, "the King not only claimed the right to colonise a large portion of the territory of the New World; but"—and this is the feature to which special attention should be given in connexion with our more immediate theme—"the principle was also asserted that English colonists in this territory were to enjoy the same constitutional rights as those possessed by Englishmen in the homeland." The recipients of the grants were two bodies of adventurers, the one resident in London, and including Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Somers, and, a little later, Sir Thomas Smith; the other, in which Chief Justice Popham and Sir Ferdinando Gorges took a most active interest, located at Plymouth. By the advice of Richard Hakluyt (whose name, though he was in Orders, again associates itself with the Middle Temple) the London Company planted a colony at Jamestown; the fortunes of the Plymouth Company, both before and after the failure of its settlement at Sagadahoc, and the rechristening of Northern Virginia as New England, lie outside our theme, though you are aware of their—I had almost said transcendent—interest for students of Anglo-American history.

Turning, therefore, south, we content ourselves with noticing that the early operations of the London Virginia Company were little more than tentative, and carried on under continuous apprehension of the action

of the Spanish Government, stimulated as it was by the vigilance of King Philip's Ambassador in London, Zuñiga, to whom the reported heretical encroachments were gall and wormwood, and who lacked his successor Gondomar's suavity of temper or manners. The slender array of settlers sent out by the Company shrank rapidly; and the appeals made in London on their behalf hung fire. In 1608 appeared the celebrated *True Relation* by Captain John Smith, who had been the actual leader of the colony almost from its outset—he liked the epithet “true,” and, if he has been charged with not always practising the virtue in question, it was certainly to him that the survival of the Colony when in its birth-throes was mainly due. In the same year, 1608, a sermon was delivered at Whitehall by Mr Symonds, Preacher at St Saviour's in Southwark, with whose powers in the pulpit, as the vigilant Professor Gayley says, “Shakespeare may very well have been acquainted.” Other literary or oratorical efforts kept up the awakened public interest at home; and it was soon recognised by the leading spirits of the enterprise, that, in the first place, a concentrated effort was necessary for a permanent settlement in the mild climate of Southern Virginia and in the advantageous strategical position on the banks of the James river; and, secondly, that the system of government adopted for the Colony needed a thorough revision. Hence the Second Charter of 1609, whereby the London Virginia Company acquired many, though not all, of the powers hitherto reserved to the Crown; so that, although the community of colonists in Virginia itself became possessed of no considerable share of rights, the political control of the

Colony passed, in a large measure, to the proprietary Company, now a body consisting of 56 city companies and 659 noblemen, gentlemen, and merchants, acting through its Council, which the Third Charter, of 1612, gave the Company express authority to elect. Thus, during the remaining thirteen years of its existence, the Virginia Company was a body in which Liberalising tendencies found full play for their efforts to contend, in an unflinching struggle, with Conservative instincts; and this statement may be fairly said to summarise the main part of the history of the Company, and of the Sandys-Southampton party within it, whose long campaign in this narrower sphere anticipated or accompanied that which the same men conducted on the floor of Parliament.

Before, however, I try to illustrate the significance of this campaign by the few personal references for which I shall find time, I must carry you back for a moment, in what I think will not be considered as altogether a digression, to the year 1609, the year of the Second Charter. With a view to the contemplated enlargement of the Colony an expedition was sent out early in June of that year, with Sir Thomas Gates, the designated "sole and absolute Governor," accompanied by Sir George Somers as Admiral, and Captain Newport, long familiar with these voyages, as Vice-admiral. Unfortunately, though grave objection had been made to the circuitous journey by the West Indies, the expedition, consisting of not less than nine vessels carrying about five hundred intending planters, and bearing with it the document of the new Charter, followed Newport's old route. Sixteen days after the ships' final start from



Falmouth—in the words of Captain Argall, who had not long before safely reached Virginia by a shorter route—a “most horrible and vehement storme, which was a taile of the West Indian *horucano*,” drove the fleet upon the islands of the Bermudas (alias Bermoothawes, alias the *Isle of Divels*, alias, from their first claimant, though not discoverer, the Somers Islands). The admiral’s ship, the *Sea Venture*, was wrecked; nor did Gates and Somers reach Jamestown till May, 1610. Here they found the Colony on the brink of dissolution, from which, however, it was preserved by the speedy arrival of Lord Delaware, chosen as Governor, we are told, for his rank, and apparently one of those solid English noblemen to whose imperturbability the State has more than once had safe recourse in critical moments of our history. Through him William Crashaw, Preacher at the Temple<sup>1</sup>, “sent salutation to Virginia: thou hast thy name from the worthiest Queen that the world ever had; thou hast thy substance from the greatest King on earth.” Soon after Lord Delaware had taken over the governorship of the colony, Sir Thomas Gates sailed for England.

Without taking a side plunge into the question of the origin of *The Tempest*, “still-vest” like the “Bermoothes” themselves, we may agree with Professor Gayley that there is but one explanation possible of the parallelism of phrase between Shakespeare’s play and the *True and Sincere Declaration of the Estate of the Colony* (entered December 1609, with the date 1610). This

<sup>1</sup> William Crashaw, a fellow of St John’s College, Cambridge, was the father of the more celebrated Richard, fellow of Peterhouse; but his theological views were the direct opposite of the poet’s.

was founded, partly on Gates's own report to the Virginian Council, but mainly on letters, then unpublished, which had been sent from the Colony. The author of the pamphlet and the dramatist must, alike, have had access to a letter so sent home by William Strachey, a survivor of the wreck, and secretary at Jamestown under both Gates and Lord Delaware<sup>1</sup>. Unless, then, we are to accept Mr Rudyard Kipling's genial conjecture that Shakespeare derived his "extensive and peculiar" knowledge of the details of the shipwreck, as narrated by Strachey, from a tipsy seaman, who must have conveyed it largely in the diction used both by the official and the poet, we must accept Mr Gayley's well-argued conclusion, which, by the way, had previously suggested itself to two previous commentators on *The Tempest*, Professor Herbert E. Greene and Mr Morton Luce. If so, how did Shakespeare obtain a sight of Strachey's letter? That Shakespeare was more or less in touch with certain prominent members of the Virginia Company, we shall find no difficulty in allowing Mr Gayley's book to have succeeded in proving. Might not, then, the "excellent Lady" to whom Strachey's letter was addressed have shown it to some of the most active

<sup>1</sup> Strachey's letter, addressed to "an excellent Lady in England" (identified by Mr Gayley with Lady Howard de Walden), was not made public till 1625, when, after the dissolution of the Company, it was brought out by Hakluyt in *Purchas his Pilgrimes*. The official despatch drawn up for the use of the Governor Lord Delaware by Strachey a few days before he indited this private letter coincides with it in its account of the condition of the Colony and of the remedies required by it, but does not touch upon the shipwreck. This despatch, which removes any doubt that might have existed as to the authenticity of Strachey's information, remained in MS. till 1849.

among them—perhaps to Southampton's foremost colleague, Sandys, and might he not have shown it to Shakespeare? Possibly.

The connexion of England and her trade with the Bermudas began by the wrecking of the ship under the command of Sir George Somers in 1609 commemorated in Shakespeare's *Tempest*<sup>1</sup>. A scheme was soon afterwards set on foot for erecting a fort on one of the islands, so as to leave the Virginians no longer dependent on supplies from home. The settlement, which it was at first intended to call Virginiola, was finally named the Somers Islands, and the design was to place it under the control of a subsidiary or under-company. But the scheme did not work; and, though the Charter of 1612 attempted to unite the two bodies organically, a distinct Corporation was soon afterwards founded for the proprietorship of the Somers Islands. The two Companies henceforth worked independently, though concurrently; but many of the most important members of the Virginia Company, notably Sandys and his associates, were also members of the Somers Islands Company, which survived its elder sister for nearly half a century. I could not pass it by here, in view of the Shakespearean associations of its origin; but its later experiences, interesting as they are, lie beyond the range of this paper.

In Virginia, the prospects of the Colony there had at last begun to improve with the arrival of Lord Delaware, whose place was, however, soon taken by Sir Thomas Dale, transferred to this service from that of

<sup>1</sup> I am informed that the descendants of Admiral Somers "still stick to the sea," and that two of them were lost in the recent War.



the United Provinces in the capacity of Marshal. One of the most important measures introduced by this vigorous administrator was a change (to which we shall have to refer again) made by him, manifestly with the support of what I have gone so far as to call the Liberalising party in the London Virginia Council, in the system of land-tenure, which could not but greatly affect the future of the community. Hitherto, land had been cultivated on the system of joint ownership, with which that of common trade went hand in hand; now, three acres of land were assigned to every settler as his property. The reform was fostered by Sir Thomas Gates, when he returned as Governor later in the year 1611, with large supplies; and henceforth no breach occurred in the prosperity of the Colony, which was again ruled with firmness and ability by Dale, the founder of Henrico, from 1614 to the year after which Shakespearean allusions are impossible.

But the critical epoch, in the very midst of which falls the date of Shakespeare's death, was full of effort on the part of the London Council of Virginia and the friends of the enterprise at home. In 1610, both parties in the Council—the City interest as represented by Sir Thomas Smith and the nobility and gentry, who might be called the nucleus of the Country party in the House of Commons, headed by Southampton and Sandys—united in what was perhaps their most stirring public appeal. It asked for a sum of not less than £30,000 to bring about “a very able and strong foundation of annexing another Kingdom”—not merely province—“to the Crown”; and it did not omit to dwell on the desire of the promoters of the enterprise to “spread the

Gospel among the Heathen people of Virginia." And in March, 1612, as already mentioned, followed the Third Charter, presenting an army of Adventurers unprecedented in its impressiveness (the merchants, it appears, paid up better than the country gentry), and, as observed, considerably extending the Company's rights of control over the affairs of the settlement. Although, in accordance with the practice of the times, the Company had claimed and obtained the right of instituting lotteries for its benefit, and although there may have been adventitious occasions for causing Virginia and its affairs to become the subject about this time of London talk, yet there is abundant evidence in contemporary literature, including that of the stage, that by this time the first American Colony was exciting something more than speculative attention or idle curiosity.

In 1612 occurred the death of Henry Prince of Wales, who had taken a special interest in the fortunes of the new Colony. Henrico Town, with Henrico County (a designation familiar to readers of *The Virginians*) had been named after him—the names of his father, and of his younger brother, and of his sister the Princess Elizabeth (a student of Raleigh) likewise, at one time or another, found topographical commemoration there. In his *Epicedium on the young Marcellus of England*, Chapman took occasion to refer to the Bermudas catastrophe as "less melting for all men" than the death of "our poor Prince." I need not detain you on the question whether *The Tempest* itself, which was one of the plays performed at the wedding of the Palsgrave and the Princess Elizabeth on St Valentine's day, 1613, was written for that occasion, or, as seems

more likely, was first produced in 1611, but cast in its final form for the nuptials of 1613, with the Masque in Act IV added<sup>1</sup>. In any case, it seems far-fetched to regard Gonzalo's description (Act II, sc. vii) of the Utopia which he would find in the island, were he king of it, as alluding to the state of things in Virginia, before Dale's land-reform. The fancy as a whole is, as you know, taken from Florio's *Montaigne*, and calls for no particular application of the kind. Another passage in *The Tempest* (Act II, sc. ii) has, with far greater probability, been thought (by Sir Sidney Lee<sup>2</sup>) to refer to early Virginian experiences—viz. Caliban's jubilant boast when he believes himself to have shaken off Prospero's yoke: "No more dams I'll make for fish." By way of contrast, one further Virginian reference of much the same date may be cited from the heights of political literature. Although Bacon's essay *Of Plantations* was revised for publication a decade later, it may fairly be assumed to have been originally written near this time; and its author cannot have been a stranger to some of the broadsides issued by the London Virginia Council for public consumption. In it is to be found a

<sup>1</sup> On the whole question see Sir A. Quiller-Couch, *Shakespeare's Workmanship* (1918), pp. 337 ff. It seems hardly possible, by the way, that, if *The Tempest* was expressly written for the royal wedding, the name chosen for the lover in the play should have been that of the Habsburg Archduke whom the Palsgrave was before long to eject from the Bohemian Throne. (M. Koch, I may add, conjectures the original of the noble-minded Prospero to have been the alchemist Emperor Rudolf II, at whose Court several Englishmen sojourned, before, like Prospero, he was overthrown by the machinations of his brother.)

<sup>2</sup> *Life of William Shakespeare* (ed. 1915), p. 433, note.



(not very clear) reference to the risk of the overplanting in Virginia of tobacco, which was introduced there in 1606<sup>1</sup>. What is of more interest to us, Bacon's essay, in view, no doubt, of the benefits which had accrued to Virginia from the strong rule of Dale and Gates, dwells on the expediency of placing the government of a *new* colony in the hands of *one* man, "assisted with some counsel"; while, though "speedy profit is not to be neglected" (we seem to know the sound of such words), neither is it to be sought beyond what may "stand with the good of the plantation." Above all, it is "the simplest thing in the world to forsake or destitute a plantation once in forwardness."

The great crisis in the history of Virginia happened after Shakespeare's death; but we can hardly speak of the political principles at work in the English Colonisation of America in his later years, without carrying our very imperfect references to early Virginian history a little further. Although, in 1613, Gondomar still indulged the hope that Virginia would be abandoned by the English, who, in this and the following year, had much jealousy to confront on the part of France as well as of Spain, the Colony maintained its existence successfully against foreign pretensions and protests. Meanwhile, the Company would have been willing to see a closer union between its interests and those of the State, and in May 1614 petitioned the House of Commons in this sense. But, though an extremely lively debate ensued, the Parliament—it was the Addled

<sup>1</sup> King James I's *Counterblast*, as Mr Alexander Brown particularly reminds us, was dated 1604, and could therefore not have been directed against *Virginian* tobacco.

Parliament, which, as is known, in spite of the efforts of Sandys and the Opposition, did not succeed in passing a single measure—had to let the matter drop. In 1616, as already noted, the cultivation of tobacco was introduced, and a “mania” on this head ensued, which had disastrous results. But at the root of the retardation of enduring commercial prosperity lay Government corruption, carried to a shameless extent by Samuel Argall, who was Governor from 1617 to 1619. This unscrupulous profiteer carried out Bacon’s advice as to “one-man government” after so thorough a fashion that he had, in the end, to escape to England in a vessel of his patron Sir Robert Rich (afterwards Earl of Warwick), of whom more anon; and in July of the same year, 1619, as already stated, the first Virginian Legislative Assembly—the first Colonial Parliament—was summoned by his successor.

Closely connected with these transactions was the critical conflict in the Company at home between the party of Sir Thomas Smith, Treasurer of the Company from 1609 to 1619, the representative of the City interest and on good terms with the Court, and Sir Edwin Sandys, who had led the Parliamentary Opposition to it almost from the beginning of James I’s reign, with Warwick’s clique intervening, but in the end returning into the Conservative bosom. Sandys’s election in 1619 to the contested office of Treasurer marked the progress of the policy of Resistance in this sphere, also, of public life—in 1620, when his name was up for reelection, King James had advised a deputation, “choose the Devil if you will, but not Sir Edwin Sandys,” who accordingly, had deemed it politic to allow

the name of Southampton to be substituted for his own. But the conflict between the Virginia Company and the claims of the Crown continued, till, in 1624, the struggle, both within the Company and without, came to an end with the dissolution of that body by royal *fiat*. But the constitutional liberties of the Colony, with their latest development into parliamentary institutions, could not be taken away; and proved, as the history of North America shows, a κτήμα ἐς αἰεί.

It is high time for us to pass on to say something of the personal claims to commemoration, as champions of the principles in question in their application to Virginia, of those individual Englishmen of note whose influence on Shakespeare's political thought—exercised directly by them or through the great teacher of the foremost among them—Professor Gayley's book is more especially designed to demonstrate. In speaking of this memorable group, I feel bound to premise that, notwithstanding his close personal as well as public connexion with at least one of its earlier leaders, Essex cannot in any true sense be regarded as a member of it. Apart from his hatred of the ascendancy of Spain, and certain ideas of foreign policy which he may have derived from Anthony Bacon or from his great brother, he showed himself in no way a harbourer of political designs, or still less, a master of political thought. I may, therefore, relegate to a note some remarks on his relations to the Puritans, and as to the use made, on the occasion of his brief and ill-starred "rebellion," of Shakespeare's *Richard II*<sup>1</sup>. As for the political opinions

<sup>1</sup> If the Puritans at one stage of Essex's career cherished hopes of him (as they had of his step-father Leicester) and if, at another,



expressed, or thought to be expressed, in Shakespeare's tragedy, which is said to have at this time gone through

these hopes were heightened by the report that he was "hearing sermons," it must be remembered that, though on the scaffold he declared himself a Protestant, and though at his trial the charge of his having worked for the restoration of Romanism in Ireland was, virtually, passed by, he was certainly shown to have intended, had he achieved success, to improve the treatment of Roman Catholics in that kingdom. In any case, in spite of certain assurances of support from Puritan ministers, his rising left the citizens of London cold. Equally ineffective had been the curious appeal set on foot by himself and his immediate followers to the "Constitutional" or anti-despotic sentiments of his expected adherents, whom we may conclude to have been, in the first instance, persons of his own rank or condition of life—the natural patrons of the players.

The fact is, of course, well authenticated that, two days before the outbreak of Essex's rebellion, his supporters attended at the Globe Theatre a performance of Shakespeare's *Richard II* specially bespoken by them. The historical parallel between the unfortunate King and Queen Elizabeth was hardly striking enough to suggest of itself the inference that she ought to be deposed like him. The notion was no doubt originally due to the publication, in 1599, of Sir John Hayward's narrative of the first year of the reign of Henry IV, which included an account of the deposition of Richard II, and was dedicated to Essex. The episode is said to have exercised a peculiar fascination upon him; and it was no doubt this, and not only because of the sensitiveness which (as Professor Firth recently showed us) she shared with other sovereigns of her age towards attacks on the Throne of this sort, that her suspicions were excited, and that she was led to observe: "Know ye not? I am Richard II." The book caused much talk, and, though Essex wished it to be called in, the author was called before the Star Chamber and imprisoned. (Hayward, as Sir Sidney Lee notes in his interesting article on him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, afterwards defended both the succession and the political principles of James I, and was a distinguished pleader, as well as historiographer at Chelsea College.)

forty performances "in open streets and houses," I will say a word before I close<sup>1</sup>.

But the name of Essex's paladin-in-chief, Southampton, as it were, takes us at once into the heart of the argument, and bids us consider both the association between the Parliamentary and the Colonial Liberalism of the period comprising Shakespeare's later years, and the inspiration drawn by this political group or school from a source to which Shakespeare, too, is held to have resorted. On both heads, some note will have to be taken of what there is of external, and what of internal, evidence.

In the case of Southampton, of whose intimate relations with Shakespeare at one time of their lives no doubt can exist, we are unfortunately without any proof of intellectual intercourse between them in the later period with which we are here more especially concerned. In Elizabeth's reign, Southampton had been a prominent figure at Court, and smiled upon by the Queen, the foremost favourite of whose later years had, in his turn, consistently shown good-will to the younger man. Southampton accompanied Essex on his ex-

<sup>1</sup> With regard to Shakespeare's relations to Essex, it is more to the purpose, though it cannot, intrinsically, be held of much significance, that, in 1599, the dramatist had in his *Henry V* (Chorus to Act v), touched on the enthusiastic welcome which London was prepared to accord to Essex on his victorious return from Ireland. Still less weight need be attached to the probability that the popular sensation caused by the arrest and execution, in 1594, of the Jewish physician Roderigo Lopez, charged with having been concerned in a plot to poison Queen Elizabeth and Essex's Spanish *protégé*, Antonio Perez, suggested to Shakespeare the character of Shylock, and even the Christian name of the Jew's intended victim..

peditions to Cadiz (1596) and the Azores (1597), and sought, though in vain, to be allowed to serve as General of the Horse under him in Ireland. He then took part in the conspiracy which brought his friend to the scaffold and consigned himself to prison. Before this, Southampton's patronage of letters and of the stage had been among the most brilliant attributes of this *flos iuventutis* of the Elizabethan age, when at the height of its splendour. His relations with Shakespeare are familiar to all students of our literature, and I am not afraid to set it down as an accepted conclusion that, whatever interpretation may be put upon these relations, they inspired the majority of the *Sonnets*. The remark of Mrs Stopes<sup>1</sup>, that, after the commencement, in 1595, of Southampton's absorbing passion for Elizabeth Vernon (whom he married three years later) "the *Sonnets* gradually ceased....None seem to suggest his voyages, knighthood, marriage and subsequent imprisonment" must surely, notwithstanding her *caveat*, be modified on the last head, since *Sonnet CVII* can hardly be dissociated from Southampton's release. But, though we have no reason for assuming a break in Shakespeare's attachment to the only patron to whom he dedicated any of his productions or who, in his turn, is known to have extended to the poet any notable munificence, we are ignorant as to the relations between them in the days of Southampton's maturity.

After his release from confinement on the accession of King James in 1603, Southampton's wayward temper

<sup>1</sup> *Shakespeare's Environment* (1914), p. 158. We are looking forward to a full *Life of Southampton* from the same distinguished writer.



(he was under arrest in the Tower for a few days in the same year for breaking "the peace of the palace") seemed to show that maturity to have not yet quite set in. But soon, under the continued sunshine of the royal favour, he gave proof of his interest in public affairs, and showed a special interest in the Colonial schemes which formed the earliest, or preliminary, stage in the making of the British Empire<sup>1</sup>. As a matter of course he was, from first to last, the staunch advocate of a resolute anti-Spanish policy; and, in 1605, the year after that in which peace had been signed with Spain, helped to fit out the early expedition, already noted, of Captain Weymouth to Virginia, almost the first sign of a systematic endeavour to supplant the Spanish dominion in North America<sup>2</sup>. Southampton, who, with at least virtual consistency<sup>3</sup>, treated opposition to Spain as a

<sup>1</sup> It is about this date that one of the most attractive among the numerous extant portraits of Southampton, that in St John's College, Cambridge, seems to belong, which shows him encased in armour, blue-eyed, and fair-haired, in the commanding grace of early manhood.

<sup>2</sup> For a long time, Spain could make a strong point of the fact (which Gondomar did not fail to urge) that her territory was being invaded by English Adventurers without any warrant from their own Government. Not until the Virginian Charter was annulled and the Colony taken under the direct protection of the Crown, was this argument unavoidably abandoned. But by this time (1624) England was again at war with Spain. As Mr Brown points out, every member of the Council of War (in April 1624) was personally interested in the Colony of Virginia.

<sup>3</sup> Southampton's scheme of a naval expedition against the Barbary Pirates, which for its success would have needed the collaboration of England and Spain was, in Gondomar's opinion, really meant to bring about a reopening of hostilities between them, together with

vital element in the national policy, likewise shared in the detestation of Rome, which, in the popular mind, was inseparable from hatred of Spain. We have it on the authority of Peckard, in his *Memoir of Nicholas Ferrar* (of whose connexion with the Virginia Company, immediately) that "the Earl of Southampton had been converted from popery by Sir Edwin Sandys." The advancement of the Protestant faith was constantly present to the Virginian adventurers, and, so early as 1617, Sandys himself was in at least indirect communication with the Leyden separatists<sup>1</sup>, as a result of whose settlement New England was, in the end, to set up an ecclesiastical system of its own. But this is a side of Colonial history which I must abstain from pursuing. As for Southampton, we shall probably be right in attributing a mainly political motive to his colonising activity, although the promptings of religious opinion may have cooperated<sup>2</sup>.

With his later political career we have here no concern, except in so far as it was associated with the

the appointment of Southampton himself as Lord High Admiral in place of Nottingham. (Cf. Gardiner, *History of England*, etc., ed. 1883, vol. III, p. 70.) Gondomar, it may be incidentally noted, who for diplomatic or other reasons, observed a very gallant bearing towards the ladies of the English Court, and (as I think I have read) professed a liking for the wines prepared in this country, is also said to have been a reader of Shakespeare, or at least to have possessed a copy of the First Folio, which he carried away with him into Spain.

<sup>1</sup> See Osgood, *The American Colonies*, etc., vol. I, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> So late as 1623 he absented himself from a meeting of the Privy Council, held for the purpose of exacting an oath against penalising Catholics according to law; but he seems in the end to have agreed to take it. (Cf. Gardiner, vol. v, p. 69, and note.)

Colonial enterprise in which he took a leading part. (His name was given to Southampton Hundred, Hampton River, and Hampton Roads in Virginia<sup>1</sup>.) In 1612, when he came up to town with the intention of furthering Sir Henry Neville's chances of the Secretaryship, he and his friends were disappointed in their hopes, and had to remain members of what may be loosely called the Opposition. At all events, although Southampton received divers honours and offices from the Crown, he preserved considerable freedom in the way of giving vent to his personal views. While, in Bacon's case, he showed himself stern against maculate merit, he refused to bow his head to the ascendancy of Buckingham. He braved the King's displeasure by his open defiance of the favourite, and by his independent action in the affairs of the Elector Palatine Frederick, and was once more committed to prison. Three years later (1624), he died from malaria in the Low Countries, soon after his eldest son, when in joint command with him of a troop of English volunteers in aid of the Elector.

Southampton, after becoming a member of the London Virginia Council in 1609, had, by the end of ten years, come to share with his friend Sandys the full control of it. In 1620 he was chosen Treasurer of the Company without opposition, when it may still have been hoped that he would be of great assistance in inducing the King to lend ear to the desires or complaints of the Council. But, at that time, the conflicts between the King and the political party to which Southampton and his friends belonged were growing more and more

<sup>1</sup> See "The Youthful Career of Southampton" in Sir S. Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 663.



bitter, and it was against the royal wish that he was reelected Treasurer in 1624, the year of his death and that of the annulment of the Virginian Charter.

With Southampton there cooperated in the Council of the Company two other noblemen whose names have an indelible connexion with that of Shakespeare. Of the brothers William and Philip Herbert, successively Earls of Pembroke, the former had served under Essex at Cadiz, but, unlike Southampton, took no part in the rising of 1601. He was much interested in Virginian affairs, and in 1620 (when both the brothers also joined the New England Company) patented not less than 30,000 acres in Virginia, which the elder undertook to fill with emigrants and cattle. The younger, known before his brother's death as Earl of Montgomery, whose course of action, whether it be called politic or selfish, in the Civil War times drew down upon him the furious hatred of the Cavaliers<sup>1</sup>, was likewise a member of the Virginian Council, and, so late as 1643, when he had definitively thrown in his lot with the adversaries of the Crown, was one of the Commissioners appointed for the government of the Plantation. The brothers' patronage of Shakespeare and of his friends and colleagues, as evinced by the dedication to them of the First Folio, and by the reference in that Dedication, to the "likings" they had expressed for the "severall parts when they were acted," and to the "indulgence" they had shown to their author, of course invests their names

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the grossly satirical *Last Will and Testament of the Earl of Pembroke*, printed in the posthumous works of Mr Samuel Butler, vol. II, London, 1715, but, so far as I am aware, of doubtful authorship.

with high literary interest. At the same time, the theory that William Herbert was the "begetter" of the *Sonnets* may be regarded as extinct, and it should be noted that his official relations with Shakespeare did not begin till 1615, when he was appointed Lord Chamberlain; so that the patronage of the brothers was, almost certainly, of an essentially private nature. We know that, at the turn of the century, Pembroke resided in a mansion near to Blackfriars, and that he was the patron of other poets besides Shakespeare—of Jonson and Chapman, and among non-dramatic poets, of the noble *trifolium* of Donne, Herbert, and Vaughan.

Southampton's imprisonment in the Tower for his participation in Essex's rising was shared by Sir Henry Neville, already mentioned, who, from 1607 to 1615, was a member of the Virginia Council. Other political allies of Southampton, for the most part his juniors in date of birth, and all of them interested in the Virginia Company, were Sir Richard Sackville, Earl of Dorset, the patron of Jonson and Drayton, in the works of both of whom references to Virginia are to be found<sup>1</sup>; Lord

<sup>1</sup> Jonson was joint author of the unlucky *Eastward Hoe*, played before King James in 1604, in which figures Sir Petronell Flash, "the first of a long and illustrious line of Virginian colonels," whom Mr Brown (I do not know on what evidence) conjectures to have been impersonated by Shakespeare. In his *Staple of News* (1625) there is a joke about Pokahontas (Act II, sc. i). Drayton was Shakespeare's "countryman" by birth, and according to tradition was, like Jonson, his boon companion to the last. By means of his *Ode to the Virginian Voyage*, he, in Mr Gayley's phrase, "crowned himself laureate of the new English world." Mr Gayley has an interesting passage on the allusions in our poetic literature to Virginia and early American colonisation, of which the most striking is the quasi-

Delaware, whose services to the colony at the most critical moment of its earlier history have been already noticed, and, among counsel learned in the law, Christopher Brooke of Lincoln's Inn and John Selden, who together drafted several of the later codes of law and government adopted by the colony. Christopher Brooke's figure is a prominent one in the fields, then still most intimately connected, of law and literature, and his *Ghost of Richard III* offers one of the most whole-hearted contemporary tributes received by the genius of Shakespeare from outside his own profession. As for Selden, who was not less actively interested in politics, ecclesiastical and general, than he was in legal science, his Liberalism was of all time, and the play of mind distinctive of him could not have omitted the future of England's Colonial empire from his speculations.

Another legal and literary notable in the Company was Sir Dudley Digges, who gave his services to the Company during the greater part of the second and third decades of the century, and between whom and Shakespeare at least an indirect connexion is suggested by the tributes from Sir Dudley's brother Leonard, the poet and Spanish scholar, inserted in the 1623 Folio, and in the 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems*. On the interest taken in Virginia by Bacon I have already prophetic eulogy of James I in the last scene of *Henry VIII* (acted at the Globe in 1613, and acted once too often), which passage, however, he, no doubt rightly, assigns to Fletcher. He adds that the figure of tree and shade, of course Biblical in its origin, also occurs in the Virginia Council's *True and Sincere Declaration* of 1610, as to which see *ante*. It is not found in Strachey's long descriptive letter printed in 1625, and reprinted in *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes* (Glasgow, 1906), vol. XIX.



touched, without drawing any Shakespearean inferences from the fact; nor can I connect Shakespeare's name with that of a very different figure in the history of the age, most intimately associated with the fortunes of the Virginia Company—Nicholas Ferrar. What stranger combination could suggest itself in the records of mental effort than Change Alley and Little Gidding—and yet I think that Shakespeare himself might have supplied us with the key to the character of an excellent man of business, with a soul above earthly things. Nicholas Ferrar, whose father and brother had long been closely connected with the business of the Company, and whose family house had, so to speak, become the head-quarters of the progressive party in the Council, after a long spell of travel abroad, at first in the suite of the young Electress Palatine on her way out to her new home, had placed his extraordinary powers of observation and his singular quickness of resolve at the service of the Company, and as its Deputy-Treasurer was the chief and most trusted adviser of Southampton and Sandys, with whom he also acted in Parliament. He saved the Company's records, and had very nearly saved its Charter; and might, had he chosen, have played a considerable part in public life. But this prospect, together with the (shall I say) lesser temptations of a rich marriage and a mathematical professorship, he, as you know, sacrificed as readily as he had taken the responsibilities of his earlier career upon him, and, in the words of one of his biographers, gave "a long farewell to the great and busy world<sup>1</sup>." The life contem-

<sup>1</sup> *Life of N. Ferrar by Doctor Jebb* (Mayor's *Two Lives*, etc., 1855), p. 221.

plative, which, in its turn, is not necessarily an idle life, and which so many greater and so many lesser men have desired, he achieved.

The above must, with a single exception which I feel sure you have already anticipated, suffice as to the personal relations—actual or possible—between the Virginia Company and the contemporary world of letters—more especially that part of it with which Shakespeare was in touch. For I have no wish to follow Professor Gayley or Mr Alexander Brown into further conclusions or guesses of a personal kind in connexion with the subject<sup>1</sup>, based on researches either in Fleet

<sup>1</sup> Mr Gayley has something to say of the *Convivium Philosophicum* apostrophised (between 1608 and 1611) in amusing verse by Serjeant John Hoskins, which met at the Mitre Tavern, immediately in the rear of the house not long before inhabited by Hooker. This Club included, among many legal wits of the period, four who were members of the Virginia Council—among them the irrepressible Richard Martin. Another of its members was Hugh Holland, a travelled fellow of Trinity and convert to Rome, who was also a member of the Mermaid Club, and who prefixed a Sonnet to the First Shakespearean Folio. Though the Mitre is more easily reached from the Inner Temple, I am bound to add that the sister Society's historical connexion with the "Founders of Liberty in America" was, on the whole, more intimate. Apart from Drake, who seems to have been connected with both Inns, the Middle Temple, besides including in its list of members other names well known in early Colonial history, can also appeal to the tradition that Hakluyt first acquired his taste for geography and travel by a visit to the chambers there of his kinsman—Sir John Popham, afterwards Chief Justice, and a Bencher and Treasurer of the Inn. The relations of the latter to the Company were long and close, though not altogether to the credit of that legal luminary. Another Treasurer of the Middle Temple interested in the affairs of the Company was Miles (afterwards Sir Miles) Sandys, the younger brother of the Archbishop,

Street or in Warwickshire, where it is certainly attractive to find, in the near neighbourhood of Stratford, probable or possible acquaintances of Shakespeare, who were also leading adventurers in the Virginian enterprise<sup>1</sup>. The chief Warwickshire as well as Essex magnate of that day, Robert Rich, the second Earl of Warwick, was one of the most conspicuous figures in the history of the Company.

and the uncle of Sir Edwin, who in 1589 joined the same Inn. Thomas Collett, a nephew of Nicholas Ferrar, too, was of the Middle Temple. Finally, the pamphlet *Virginia impartially examined* was composed in the interests of the Company by a Barrister of that Inn, and is preserved in its Library. (See an interesting article in *The Times*, January 30, 1919, "The Middle Temple and America," printed on the acceptance of the present U.S. Ambassador as a Bencher of the Inn; and cf., for additional data, *The Middle Temple and Sir Walter Raleigh*, speech by the Master of the Temple (Dr E. W. Barnes) in the Middle Temple Hall on October 20, 1918.)

<sup>1</sup> Among these names there is one which must not be left unmentioned, at least in a note. Sir Fulke Greville (afterwards Lord Brooke), sat in Parliament as Knight of the shire for Warwickshire, together with Sir Thomas Lucy, and like him in the Protestant interest, and was a member of the Virginia Council from 1607. He had, in his earlier days, been the friend of Spenser and the comrade of Sidney. Though he was a politician who thought for himself, he held office both under Elizabeth and under her successor, and was in 1614 appointed to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer which he held till 1621. If he was a Liberal, his Liberalism was of no very advanced kind. His two tragedies, of which *Mustapha* is the better known, are described by Charles Lamb as "political treatises rather than plays"; and his style is "frozen with intellect," like the literary drama of most ages. As for Robert Rich the younger, his biography, admirably summarised by Professor Firth, covers a long and momentous period of both home and colonial history. The family feud originating, there can be no doubt, in the adulteries of his beautiful mother; Essex's



The real leader of the party in the Company to which, except on occasion, Warwick was adverse, and the foremost representative of its interests in the House of Commons, where, for many years, he held a leading position as the determined foe of arbitrary government, was Sir Edwin Sandys. His eminent name has inevitably been more than once mentioned by me already, while I have necessarily (to use a word much affected by his tutor Hooker) "pre-supposed" a familiarity with the general character of his public career. The pedigree of his family is curiously complicated, but we need only note here that he was the second son and namesake of an Archbishop of York, who, in the troubled earlier half of Queen Elizabeth's reign, managed, on the whole successfully, to combine strong Protestant sympathies with administrative vigour; the younger brother of

sister Penelope, of whom reminiscences have, I conceive without good evidence, been sought in more than one production of Shakespeare's, broke out in a quarrel between Warwick and Lord Cavendish (afterwards Earl of Devonshire), supported by his friend and leader Sir Edwin Sandys, and must have contributed to bring about the appointment of the Commission on whose report the Virginia Company's Charter was annulled. Warwick was a member of the new (royal) Council for the Government of the Colony, in whose affairs and those of the Somers Islands and other colonial companies he had taken a most active interest since he had succeeded to his father's dishonoured earldom, three years after the death of Shakespeare. (See as to his earlier activities A. P. Newton, *The Colonizing Activities of the English Puritans* (1914), pp. 34 ff.) Puritan in his leanings, he was out of sympathy with the Court, though he instigated its action against Sandys; and he leaves on us the general impression of one of those great personages in the world of commerce and finance who, aware of the claims of their epoch, in the main play for their own hand.

Sir Samuel Sandys, ancestor of the Lords Sandys of Ombersley, a staunch friend of religious toleration; and the elder of George, the translator of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, whose career, especially if viewed in connexion with that of his more famous brother, is one of varied distinction<sup>1</sup>.

Sir Edwin Sandys, the central figure of a most memorable chapter of British constitutional history, is compendiously described by our standard authority on that period<sup>2</sup> as having "without any pretensions to Bacon's genius, possessed a large fund of common-sense." He likewise possessed, what in a politician is of at least equal value, very genuine moral courage; so

<sup>1</sup> He was long interested in the affairs of the Virginian Company, but finally (on being refused the post of Secretary to it) severed the connexion. In the colony itself, where he seems to have acquired a plantation, he appears to have made more enemies than friends; at home, the work by which he is chiefly remembered, is his *Translation*, which he in part completed "amongst the roaring of the seas" and which can hardly have commended itself to the sympathies of the Puritan element in the popular party. He became a devoted adherent of King Charles I; but when, so late as 1638, he accepted the office of London agent of the Virginian Legislative Assembly, and sought to bring about a revival of the old self-governing Virginian Company in London, he was disavowed both by the Assembly and by the King (1642). George Sandys, who in his day was equally celebrated as a scholar and as a traveller, appears to have possessed something of the indefatigable energy, without the concentrated force, of his more famous brother. A singularly interesting feature in his biography is his intimacy with Falkland, the most attractive to many moderns, as he was to Clarendon, of the chief personalities of the Civil War (see J. A. R. Marriott's *Life and Times of Falkland*, second edition, 1908, pp. 84 ff.). For a pedigree of the whole Sandys family see Sir B. Burke's *Dictionary of the Landed Gentry* (1858), pp. 1060-1.

<sup>2</sup> Gardiner, vol. I, p. 185.

that his political career as a whole did lasting honour both to his reputation and that of the party which acted with him, and to the teaching which was beyond doubt, the chief formative force in at least his earlier intellectual and moral growth—the teaching of Richard Hooker. The principle of that teaching was formulated by Edmund Burke in the words: “The distinguishing part of our constitution is its liberty....But the only liberty I mean is a liberty connected with order: that not only exists along with order and virtue, but which cannot exist at all without them<sup>1</sup>,”—a definition which, most assuredly, would not have been spurned by Shakespeare. As is well known, the relations between Edwin Sandys and his friend George Cranmer (the son of a more celebrated but less fortunate Archbishop, who himself, after a short official career, prematurely lost his life in Ireland) and their tutor at Corpus, Oxford, were of the closest intimacy, and have indissolubly linked their names with his. George Cranmer’s literary association with Hooker’s great work, and the relations between their ecclesiastical opinions, lie beyond our present scope. As for Sandys, whether or not he was instrumental, through his father, in obtaining for Hooker the Mastership of the Temple, his own public life began with his entry into Parliament in the year (1586) following on that of his tutor’s appointment, and also marked by the commencement of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Sandys, it may be well to point out, in view of his later public action, was no Puritan; as is clear from the book which he completed in 1599, after a three

<sup>1</sup> Speech on his arrival at Bristol (1774), *Works*, 1852, vol. III, p. 230.



years' Continental journey in the company of his friend Cranmer, and which he originally dedicated to Whitgift. This work, first called *A Relation of the State of Religion*, and afterwards reprinted under the more taking title of *Europae Speculum*, though strongly anti-Papalist (it was subsequently translated by no less a controversialist than Sarpi, who had doubtless been no stranger to its composition), is not incorrectly described by Professor A. F. Pollard<sup>1</sup>, as written in a tone remarkably tolerant for the times. What most interests us at the present day in Sandys's essay (though it possesses, also, general historic value) are the references in it to what, then as now, seemed hardly more than a speculative issue—the Reunion of “at least the Reformed Churches.” The tolerance of Sandys's earlier religious views is not out of keeping with his later (1621) exposition, in the House of Commons, of the dangers with which the Protestant Faith was threatened by the course of events on the Continent, or even with his rather earlier support of the efforts of the British Separatists (Brownists) at Leyden. These efforts, which Warwick also favoured, ended in the event which next year will be commemorated on both sides of the sea—the sailing of the *Mayflower* in September 1620, with a royal promise of freedom of religious worship to the intending settlers<sup>2</sup>, the principle represented by whose advent was, after a long historical evolution, at last established in New England.

<sup>1</sup> In his excellent article on Sandys in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. I.

<sup>2</sup> See Gardiner's stirring chapter, “The Voyage of the *Mayflower*” in his fourth volume. It was largely owing to Sandys that a patent from the Virginia Company had been granted to the exiles.

In the 16th and 17th, more perhaps than in any other, century of our history, the motives of religious and of political history cannot be distinguished without difficulty. But with Sandys, as with the popular party headed by him during nearly the whole of the reign of James I, it may be said to have been political principle proper in which they found the directive force of their action. The object they had in view and at heart was Constitutional government—in other words a system of political life based upon the consent of the governed. The data put together by Professor Gayley would, I think, suffice to prove this proposition, and to justify his further enquiry as to the measure in which this political conception was derived from, or at least in full consonance with, the teaching of Hooker. These data might, moreover, without difficulty be supplemented; and perhaps the most striking of them are crowded together in the brief notes of the debate on Inquisitions, held on May 21, 1614 (the arguments are not added) cited by Gardiner<sup>1</sup>:

No successive King [i.e. no King by mere right of succession], but first elected. Election double, of person, and care; but both come in by consent of people, and with reciprocal conditions between King and people. That a King by conquest [i.e. who founds his title on such a claim as conquest, instead of on that of reciprocal agreement, actual or understood] may also (when power [i.e. when feasible]) be expelled.

Ten years before this (1604), Sandys had drawn up the Report of the House of Commons Committee for the abolition of the King's feudal tenures; and, in 1610, he was member of a Committee for considering the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, p. 240.

"Great Contract," whereby these rights were to be commuted for an annual grant to the Crown. An attempt to bring him over to the Court party having failed, he, as already noted, reached the height of his parliamentary position in the days of the Addled Parliament (1614), and after being, at the dissolution of that Assembly, summoned before the Council, and bound over to remain in London, he gave himself up, during the seven years in which Parliament remained unconvoked, to Colonial affairs, and to those of Virginia in particular. He had, as we saw, taken a leading part in promoting the Company's Charters of 1609 and 1612, he had favoured the adoption, in 1616, of the system of land-tenure by which Dale had begun to base public prosperity upon private interest; and, after, in 1617, he had been appointed Assistant-Treasurer of the Company, he was, in the following year, by a politic combination of parties, elected to the Treasurership. A thorough reform of the Colonial administration followed. Though, when, in 1620, he was again proposed for the Treasurership, he, as we have seen, thought it more prudent to secure the election of his *alter ego*, Southampton, in his place, and though both of them, with their chief adherents, had to undergo some petty persecutions so late as 1621, their principles had prevailed in Virginia itself, and a great era of Colonial history had thus set in. Sandys, whom we must leave at the height of his career, was not only a clear and free political thinker, but a practical administrator of great ability and vigour, intent upon keeping away from the Colony the undesirable element of population which has so often been an ignominious drawback to the



beginnings of Colonial undertakings, and upon multiplying the industries on which the growth of its prosperity was largely to depend. But it is as a convinced Constitutionalist that he has to be more especially remembered. Together with those who followed in his footsteps, he proved Gondomar to have shown some insight when warning King James that the Virginian Court in London would, in the end, be found a seminary for a "seditious" Parliament. In 1623, the new split in the Company already noted led to Sandys being once more placed under arrest (in his own house), and to the annulment of the Charter in the following year. But the Colony retained the representative institutions which the action of Sandys—now near the close of his labours—had secured for it, and what was to prove the greatest part of his life's work was never undone.

That the political principles which he conspicuously applied to the reorganisation of the political life of Virginia were, in his case, to a notable extent directly derived from the teaching of Hooker, must, in view of the intimacy of the two men, and personal piety of the pupil towards the teacher, be *a priori* regarded as highly probable. Professor Gayley has, however, further undertaken to show, that the internal evidence as to the influence of Hooker's writings upon Sandys as a politician helps to establish the same conclusion; and I have no hesitation in expressing my opinion that, in this part of his argument, he has been indisputably successful.

The work on which Hooker's fame enduringly rests, the great treatise on *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, was begun at the Temple, where, as already noted, he had, in 1585, been appointed to the Mastership. Most

of the Benchers had desired to see the Reader, Walter Travers, chosen in his stead; and, in accordance with the spirit—one might almost say with the demands—of their age, a lively controversy ensued between them<sup>1</sup>.

But though, in this contest, Travers, like Hooker himself, had shown no personal rancour, the atmosphere of the Temple was for its Master inevitably one of continuous controversy, and, as it has been well put by Bishop Paget<sup>2</sup>, it was this experience which led Hooker to write his famous treatise. In preparing it, he was desirous of finding out why his opponents—including a single-minded divine such as Travers—"judged what he himself believed, revered and loved, to be corrupt and wrong." The earliest books of the *Polity* were probably written at the Temple, before, in consequence of his wish for removal from this area of combat, he was presented by Archbishop Whitgift to the Rectory of Boscombe near Salisbury, where he finished the first four Books, published in 1594. It is with the First Book, together with a few sections of the Second, that we are here principally concerned<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Travers had been commended by the late Master, "Father Alvy," on his deathbed, and had been favoured by Burghley; while Whitgift, who would not hear of Travers and afterwards inhibited him, had at first suggested one of the Queen's Chaplains, Nicholas Bond (subsequently the subject of much abuse by Martin Marprelate) for the vacancy. The inhibition of Travers led to the proffer by him of a long Supplication, which it seemed incumbent on the new Master to answer; and Travers then remained in the background till, in 1594, he became, for a short time, Provost of Trinity College, Dublin.

<sup>2</sup> In his *Introduction to the Fifth Book of the Ecclesiastical Polity* (second edition, Oxford, 1907), pp. 36 ff.

<sup>3</sup> We have no present occasion for discussing the Preface to the work, prefixed to the first five Books when posthumously published in

The First Book, then, addresses itself straightway to the great theme of Hooker's literary labours, towards which everything written by him, either within or outside the framework of his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, converges—the fundamental idea of Law, with the consequences springing from this idea, and the argument that Law does not consist of the prescripts of arbitrary will, but is either identical with Reason or a result of the use of it<sup>1</sup>.

The particular application of these conclusions, which came home directly to men engaged in political life at home, or in laying its foundations in other lands than that of which they were natives, are expressed, with perfect clearness, in a section of the First Book<sup>2</sup> which explains

how reason doth lead men unto the making of human laws whereby politic societies are governed, and to agreement about laws whereby the fellowship or communion of independent societies standeth.... Two foundations, we read, there are which bear up public societies; the one, a natural inclination, whereby all men desire sociable life and fellowship; the other, an order expressly or secretly agreed upon touching the manner of their

1604, or the standpoint—that of resistance to the changes demanded by the *Puritan Book of Discipline*—which Hooker there assumes and elaborately defends, undertaking in reply to show that there is probable ground for the existing law of ecclesiastical government, and no necessary reason against it.

<sup>1</sup> Thus (as Dean Church states the case in his masterly *Introduction to Book I*) "every law of God is a law of reason, and every law of reason is a law of God. Laws, which are of God, cover the whole field of venture...[and are] *antecedent* to Scripture, the supernatural law.... There is no authority without reason: no just authority which cannot give its reason; no authority which is not at last based on reason which can be tested and verified."

<sup>2</sup> Sec. x, 1.



union in living together. The latter is that which we call the law of a commonweal, the very soul of a politic body, the parts whereof are by law held together, and set on work in such actions as the public good requireth.

What have we here, in germ, but the idea of the Social Compact, the very foundation of the political philosophy of which Sandys and his party were the first parliamentary exponents, and on which was built up the Constitutional life of Virginia and New England?

Of still more direct bearing upon the principles of government on which, in Virginia in the first instance, was based the political edifice that outlasted even the annulment of the Company's Charter by King James I, is another passage in the same section of the same Book<sup>1</sup>. Here the assent of the governed is treated as indispensable to any system of government—notwithstanding the Aristotelian maxim of "a kind of natural right in the noble, wise, and virtuous to govern them which are of servile disposition." The patriarchal principle or method having proved not to admit of application to so large a complex of families as that of which "every politic society" in the world consists, no mode of exercise of complete lawful power was found possible except "by consent of men, or by immediate appointment of God." Over the latter alternative Hooker, considering the age at which he lived and wrote, passes with singular ease, noting how men recognised that "to live by one man's will became the cause of all men's misery," and summing up, with the half-ironical conclusion:

for any prince or potentate of what kind soever upon earth to exercise the same [power] of himself, and not either by express

<sup>1</sup> Sec. x, 4.

commission, immediately and personally received from God, or else by authority derived at the first from their consent upon whose persons they impose laws, it is no better than mere tyranny.

The limitation conceded<sup>1</sup> that these laws shall be devised by "none but wise men" is undeniably founded upon a very reasonable consideration, and, as we shall see, commended itself, for instance, to those who took so practical a view of politics as Shakespeare's. But it cannot be said to have found a definite place in any political Constitution, however frequently it may have been attempted to establish "Aristodemocracy"—an excellent word—meant, I take it, to imply something very different from an oligarchy of rank, age, or wealth, or from the establishment of a balance of power between the few and the many—a solution recommended by Erasmus<sup>2</sup> and aimed at in not a few Constitutions of the past. Hooker upholds popular government in no faltering terms<sup>3</sup>; though it must be conceded that certain of the reasons suggested by him for adapting laws to the jealousies of the "many-headed" have—may we venture to call it?—a Machiavellistic tinge. And, even in the Eighth and last Book of his great work, written not long before his death in 1600, but not likely to have been left unread at least by his faithful friend and pupil Sandys (George Cranmer died in the same year), he adheres to his Constitutional position. In this Book, the argument of which is designed to refute the Puritan contention that legal ecclesiastical dominion should not be allowed

<sup>1</sup> Sec. x, 8.

<sup>2</sup> In his *Institutio Principis Christiani*.

<sup>3</sup> Sec. x, 9.

to any civil Prince or Governor, he describes the English monarchy as the pattern of a Monarchy by Law<sup>1</sup>.

But the right of Legislation, which implies the right of Representation for legislative purposes, also implies that of Resistance—with its not always avoidable or avoided consequence, the right of Revolution. The right of Resistance, which Sandys and his party put into practice at home, and which was carried to its extreme consequences, both by the generation that followed on theirs at home and by the descendants of the Colonists whom they had planted beyond the Atlantic, cannot, of course, be said to have been taught explicitly by Hooker; and to insist upon it would, it must be granted, have ill accorded with the essential spirit of his great treatise. Yet he certainly goes beyond the general maxim enunciated in his First Book<sup>2</sup>, that “to constrain men into anything inconvenient doth seem unreasonable,” when, towards the close of the same Book<sup>3</sup>, after appealing to Scripture in support of the principle that

“the public power of all societies is above every soul contained in them,” he adds: “And the principal use of that power is to give laws unto all that are under it; which laws in such case we must obey, unless there be reason shewed which may necessarily enforce that the law of reason or of God doth enjoin the contrary.”

Neither Hampden nor Washington could have asked for more than this: and, in theory, though the truths

<sup>1</sup> “The axioms of our regal government are these: *Lex facit regem*; the king’s grant of any favour made contrary to the law is void: *Rex nihil potest nisi quod iure potest.*” Sec. II, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Sec. X, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Sec. XVI, 6.



may not all be of equal strength, the chain is without a break from Hooker to Locke, and from Locke to that true-born and bred Virginian, President Jefferson.

We may, then, I think, accept without much hesitation the conclusions reached by Professor Gayley as to the influence of Hooker's political teaching upon the principles and action of the Makers of Virginia and of Sandys in particular. But what is to be our judgment of the further attempt to discover a direct connexion between that teaching and the political thought—to call it philosophy would almost be like begging the question—of Shakespeare? I may say, at once, that to the external evidence, or semblance of external evidence, on the subject accumulated by Professor Gayley I attach only a quite secondary importance. Shakespeare's intimacy with Southampton is, of course, a fact beyond dispute; but it came to an end very soon after the publication (in 1593 or 1594) of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Of Shakespeare's relations to Essex and his rebellion—the central incident of Southampton's earlier life—we have already spoken: no serious attempt has ever been made to construe them into an indication of political sympathies. With Sandys and other members of his party in Parliament and in the Virginia Company Shakespeare may have been in occasional contact—further than this, however, the external evidence in but a very few instances extends. It is perhaps strongest in the case of Pembroke and his brother Montgomery, whose private patronage Shakespeare certainly enjoyed. No directly personal relations of any kind seem traceable between Shakespeare and other earlier members of the Virginia Council or subscribers to the Company, though he may have met

Lord Delaware at the Mermaid—a resort said to have been, likewise, frequented by Christopher Brooke, who was employed as draughtsman by the Company, in 1612 pleaded for the shareholders of the Blackfriars Theatre, and was a genuine admirer of the dramatist. I am at a loss to see between what other members of the Virginia Council or of the Constitutional party in Parliament and Shakespeare more than a possible indirect connexion can be established. Mr Gayley's account of the meetings at the Mitre is interesting enough; but the attempt to treat them as having afforded to Shakespeare "a nucleus of associations, personal or literary," must be relegated into the realm of ingenious conjecture. Finally, it would be hazardous to draw any inferences as to the influence upon Shakespeare of the political principles which his Warwickshire acquaintances interested in Virginian Colonisation may have imbibed from Hooker's teaching. There may have been some general affinity of thought or feeling on public matters between him in his later years and others besides Fulke Greville—but is it possible to say more?

On the whole, therefore, attractive as is the use to which Mr Gayley has turned his many-sided researches, of which it has necessarily been impossible to furnish a complete account here, I cannot pretend to think that they carry us very far in the direction of the result to which he believes them to tend. I by no means imply that, taken together, they should be classed with those "discoveries" concerning Shakespeare's "environment," as to which, without any prejudice to Mrs Stopes's thorough and valuable studies, one might, as Sir Sidney Lee observes, "as well say that Shakespeare had

Huguenot views because he lodged in the house of a Huguenot refugee (an acquaintance which he may have owed to his fellow-townsmen Richard Field, whose wife was a Huguenot).” And, even, were it satisfactorily demonstrated that Shakespeare was well acquainted with all the noblemen and gentlemen connected with the Virginia Company between whom and him some kind of personal link would be discovered, it would not, of course, follow, either that his way of thinking on political questions and issues was impregnated with theirs or that of their leaders, or, supposing this to have been the case, that what he had thus derived was assimilated by him into a system of political thought or philosophy. Before adverting, in conclusion, to this latter hypothesis, will you bear with me while I rapidly attempt to enquire whether the former can be in any measure substantiated from Shakespeare’s plays<sup>1</sup>?

May I, without plunging you into the maze of the chronology of Shakespeare’s plays, venture to divide them, with the help of the instructive table recently printed by my friend Mr William Poel<sup>2</sup>, into three groups? They correspond, roughly, to the periods of his life in which he was, successively, acquiring, together with a knowledge of his twofold profession, a growing experience of the world around him; at the height of his creative power and activity; and more at leisure to look back on a prosperous career and round upon human

<sup>1</sup> In what follows I have mainly depended on my own reading, while not abstaining from making use of Professor Gayley’s investigations.

<sup>2</sup> Table III in *Prominent Points in the Life and Writings of Shakespeare*, reprinted from *The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* (Manchester University Press, 1919).



life and its varied problems. And may I reckon these divisions, as marked off by the dates at which his several plays were first produced, at the playhouses or at Court, as covering, in turn, the periods from 1591 to 1596, June 1595 to 1599 or 1600, and thence to the close?

In the earliest of these groups of plays, it will be remembered that Shakespeare is largely adapter rather than author, though his wit and wisdom naturally found their opportunities in his additions. The philosophy of Jack Cade in *Part II of Henry VI*, who prefers fighting to famishing (Act IV, sc. x), is as purely dramatic as is that of the writer of *Sonnet LXIV*, who, in view of the topsy-turveydom of the world, "cries for restful death." Neither in *The Comedy of Errors* nor in *Love's Labour's Lost*—assuredly the two earliest Shakespearean comedies—shall we seek for a revelation of political or social thought, albeit in the latter play Armado addresses the "Anointed" with no very reverent humility (Act v, sc. ii), and Costard, who has been derisively announced as a "member of the Commonwealth," already plays with the term "degree," which, as we shall see, became a favourite with Shakespeare in the wider sense of "ordered system"—an idea never more forcibly expressed than by Hooker<sup>1</sup>. Nor would a similar search

<sup>1</sup> In Book I of his *Ecclesiastical Polity* he uses the word in the sense of "kind" or "sort" (sec. v, 2) and in the ordinary sense of "steps" (sec. VIII, 8). In the posthumous Preface he mentions University degrees. As to the *locus classicus* (sec. III, 2) in which he dwells on the Law or Order of Nature, which Shakespeare in the widest sense calls "degree," see below; but I am not aware that Hooker himself ever uses the word with so special a significance. Of any metaphysical use of the term by either of them there can of course be no question.

be more successful in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, although in this charming work are to be found the germs of so much later fruit; or in that feast of frolic and fun, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In *The Merchant of Venice*, a graver note is struck, and there is no need for recalling Portia's vindication of mercy as a more than royal prerogative. Curiously enough, the same play contains, in the speech of the Prince of Aragon (Act II, sc. ix), a reference to that regard for established political and social order which Hooker enjoins and which Shakespeare is never weary of enforcing, and to the necessity of making the tenure of "estates, degrees, and offices" depend on merit only. The same opinion or sentiment recurs in the Gardener's speech in *Richard II* (Act III, sc. iv), a play probably produced at no very distant date from that of *The Merchant*.

Both *Richard II*, however, and the perhaps slightly earlier *King John* show how, after Shakespeare had once begun to fix his attention upon wellknown characters and episodes of English history, he had become conscious of their bearing upon the political life of the nation in later periods, and in that of the actual production of his historical dramas in particular. National unity, and its correlative, the nation's power of determining its own destinies, are consistently recognised as the ideals which England, of all countries, is called upon to realise. In *King John*, spiritual and temporal authority confront each other in barren conflict, and the action ends on the note of self-sufficing patriotism, typically sounded by the Bastard Faulconbridge, whom it is hardly going too far to identify with the people of

England—since national unity and sovereignty is the one thing he has, and they have, at heart<sup>1</sup>.

This, however, it should be observed, does not amount to a system of political thought; and it seems to me useless to seek for hidden or secondary meanings where they are not to be found. Thus, the self-deception of the ill-fated Richard's assurance (Act III, sc. ii) that

Not all the water in the rough rude sea  
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king,

and his not less lofty denunciation of those who, like Northumberland, have been guilty of deposing him (Act IV, sc. i) cannot, I feel sure, be regarded as reflecting ironically upon the doctrine of Divine Right. Nor can the Bishop of Carlisle's condemnation of subjects who dare to pass sentence on their Sovereign (*ib.*) be rightly described as an obvious attempt to buttress a falling cause by an obsolete theory. Such passages as these, of course, merely exemplify Shakespeare's unequalled dramatic power of making his personages speak in accordance with his conception of them. At the same time, we recognise here a striking advance upon the treatment of political history in the earlier *Richard III*, where Shakespeare takes over his chief character ready-made from popular (originally, of course, partisan) legend, and supplies no background to the action beyond what he has derived from the same lurid page. Yet this play, too—truly tragic, notwithstanding the dramatist's crude use of his historic material—rises to a lofty view of political morality to which

<sup>1</sup> Mr Morton Luce, a fine Shakespearean critic, has pointed this out.



Hooker would not have hesitated to subscribe, in a passage in which with the King's command is contrasted that of the King of Kings in the letter of His Law<sup>1</sup>.

So we may pass on to a group of plays belonging to the first years of Shakespeare's maturity as a dramatist and including some of the choicest gems of his poetic genius. Of political thought or commentary we shall find no trace either in *Romeo and Juliet*, though the story brings home, with incomparable force, the dire ἀνάγκη of faction; or, with a single exception<sup>2</sup>, in *All's Well that Ends Well*, a play which aesthetic criticism has in vain striven to redeem from neglect due to insuperable ethical repugnance. Far different is the case with *Hamlet*—the profoundest of all Shakespeare's dramatic creations—because the single personality and mental and moral experiences of the hero reflect those of humanity at large, and therefore those of the poet who created the character<sup>3</sup>. Among these elements could not be missing the sense of man's responsibility to the

<sup>1</sup> Act I, sc. iv. This is the Supernatural Law which, according to *Eccl. Polity* (Bk. I, sec. xi), God has made known by Scripture. How futile, in the face of such a principle, is Richard's boast (Act v, sc. iii):

“—the King's name is a tower of strength,  
Which they upon the adverse faction want!”

<sup>2</sup> This is the passage (Act I, sc. ii) illustrating by the simile of the beehive, the maxim that the prosperity of a community depends on the performance of his duties by every member of it. Cf. below, as to *Henry V*.

<sup>3</sup> It is impossible here to attempt to distinguish between the recasts of the original old play. Perhaps I am assuming too late a date for the first Shakespearean revision, which Mr J. Dover Wilson's recent discussion of the bibliographical side of the subject shows good reason for dating about June 15, 1593.

community in which he has been placed by the accidents of birth and State—a responsibility of which he cannot free himself except by flying to the unknown (Act III, sc. i)<sup>1</sup>. For the rest, our human nature was not planned by the Creator so carefully, “with such large discourse” (a word much affected, in this sense, by Hooker), in order that we should abstain from exerting the Reason implanted in us (Act IV, sc. iv). From this source must be drawn our principles of duty towards the State and its supreme authority. To flatter royalty to the top of its bent may befit the servility of a Rosencrantz (Act III, sc. iii); while the belief in “the divinity that doth hedge a King” may be fairly taken as a proof of the self-confidence, rather than of the theoretic principles, of the regicide Claudius (Act IV, sc. iii). The remarks which, towards the close of the play, Hamlet drops in a cynical mood, as to the inconvenient levelling spirit of the age (Act V, sc. i), and as to the hazards of the hindmost (Act V, sc. ii), cannot be held to illustrate Shakespeare’s anti-democratic tendencies, since they are merely utterances natural to a personage born and bred among the exclusives.

To a time not very remote from the production of *Hamlet*, as first revised by Shakespeare, also belongs that of both *Parts of Henry IV* and (though at what point in the sequence of the other Falstaff plays, if in that sequence at all, the present is not an occasion for dis-

<sup>1</sup> I confess myself unable to follow Professor Gayley in tracing an analogy between Hamlet’s statement of the great dilemma, and refusal to accept it, and a very notable passage in *Ecclesiastical Polity* (Book I, sec. x, 9) already cited and offering a shrewd counsel to framers of Constitutions.

cussing<sup>1</sup>) of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The last-named hurriedly composed farce, said with some internal probability to have been written in a fortnight so as to comply with a foolish wish of Queen Elizabeth's, offered no opportunity for the expression of serious thought, although the genius of Shakespeare found one for the depiction of a most serious passion (jealousy). But, with *Part I of Henry IV*, Shakespeare resumed the series of his national Histories, putting into dramatic form the narrative of the epoch of national life preceding the Tudor age, in which his own lot was cast, and to which the first two Lancaster reigns had bequeathed some of their most vital national traditions. Where, if not in the *Henry IV* plays, and in their sequel *Henry V*, could the dramatist, had such been his purpose, have found apt occasion for laying down the principles on which may be securely established a monarchy at once popular and strong, and fit to prove victorious both over factions at home and over foreign foes? And, in truth, none of Shakespeare's plays are so truly national and so truly popular as these, whether in their serious or in their comic scenes and characters; nor can any be said so constantly, as it were, to invite the dramatist to impart, in however concrete a form, his ideas concerning the forms and methods of government best suited to England and to Englishmen. It may be worth while to note, with a certain measure of detail, after what fashion he responds to the invitation.

The *First Part of Henry IV* exhibits the conflict of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mr J. M. Robertson's ingenious essay *The Problem of the Merry Wives of Windsor*, published by the Shakespeare Association 1917.



faction at its height, engulfing in its fury not only doughty champions of the one or other side, but "ancient lords and reverend bishops." Few can pause, like Sir Walter Blunt (Act iv, sc. iii), to apply the infallible principle that they cannot be right who stand against Anointed Majesty. Before the final struggle, Worcester and King Henry enter as it were into statement against statement—faction putting its case against faction (Act v, sc. i); and it is noticeable that, with all his denunciation of rebellion, the King assents to the trial by combat offered by the Prince to Hotspur, although, on gaining the victory, he once more commands the suppression of rebellion everywhere (sc. v). In the *Second Part*, we have a singularly animated picture of political disturbance and its remedies. In the opening scene, Northumberland's despair takes the form of resignation to anarchy—the direct contradiction of that Order which is Heaven's first law ("let order die!" see, also, *Eccl. Polity*, Bk I, II, 3, and the famous passage in III, 2 referred to below). The Archbishop of York essays to convert rebellion into "religion" (Act I, sc. ii), while expecting that the "fond many," the "common dog" which "disgorged" King Richard, will now be ready to desert its favourite, Bolingbroke (sc. iii). King Henry treats his present trouble as a necessity, as it was a necessity that compelled him to become great (Act III, sc. i); the Archbishop frankly pursues his private quarrel with the King under cover of the Commonwealth's complaints against him (Act iv, sc. i). In the end, the leaders of the Rebellion having been tricked to their doom (Act iv, sc. ii), the King's task is achieved. He

bequeaths to his son, with his hard-won Crown, the policy he has intended to pursue of distracting attention from home quarrels by foreign expeditions (Act IV, sc. v); and it is with an injunction of loyal adherence to established institutions and of national self-confidence whether for war or for peace, that the new reign sets in (Act V, sc. ii).

In *Henry V*, it is impossible to mistake the dramatist's satisfied and almost joyous consciousness that the age of faction, which corroded the vital strength of the people, has been superseded by that of internal unity, intent only on some great national achievement. One more attempt at rebellion is cast off, as it were, in passing and without either hesitation or difficulty, as with a firm step, King Harry continues on his course: "Now, Lords, for France!" (Act II, sc. ii). The State is so well protected that

While that the armed hand doth fight abroad,  
The advised head defends itself at home

(Act I, sc. ii); on which there follows another of those noteworthy passages in which Shakespeare dwells on the benefits of ordered government, where all parts "high and low and lower," "keep in one consent." The Archbishop of Canterbury carries on the thought by comparing the "order of a perfect kingdom" to that of a beehive, in a passage which Mr Gayley is no doubt right in thinking to have been adapted from Lyly's *Euphues and his England* (p. 262 in Arber's Reprints, 1868), but which may not the less be taken as indicating the poet's own way of thinking. (See for the same simile *ante*, as to *All's Well that Ends Well*.) Borne along, as it were, on the crest of such high thoughts, the im-

mediate action of the play rises to the height of its ulterior purpose; and, as "model to her inward greatness," England "like little body with a mighty heart," after shaking off from herself all unkindly elements, enters on her great enterprise. (See Chorus to Act II.) But the unity on which this England's strength depends is not a unity of bondsmen under a despot; the King's subjects stand by him as by one who, in the hour of supreme effort, calls those who join in it with him "brothers" (Act IV, sc. iii); each does his duty, and does it gladly. This seems, after all, the simple moral of the famous nocturnal exchange of theories of allegiance between King Harry and privates Bates and Williams (Act IV, sc. i). The King deduces from the views of the soldier the overwhelming conclusion that, with no recompense but that of "ceremony," the King has to bear the whole responsibility, moral and material, of the deeds done in his name. Private Williams's doubts remain unsatisfied—the answer to them being, of course, that, in a well-ordered political community, every subject (or every "national," in the jargon of our own day) has his share of responsibility for public acts to bear, as the King has his, without "the soul" of either remaining any the less his own. The phrase, thus understood, is, indeed, a bond of brotherhood, which holds firm in battle, prayer preceding, and thanksgiving following, and the glory of victory being ascribed to God alone (Act IV, sc. viii). The wonderful poetic grace (if it may be so called) with which patriotism is here merged in piety (a distinctive feature in the historic Henry V) must not be enlarged upon here.

Curious, however, as it may seem, it is not in these



great dramas, in closest contact though they are with English history, but in a tragicomedy wholly detached in subject from the national life, that occur Shakespeare's most notable utterances on topics falling within the range of political science or philosophy. Whether or not *Troilus and Cressida*, as it has come down to us, represents a later version of an earlier play, and whether it was into this version that a satirical design was first infused, must remain a matter of conjecture, on which the date, or dates, of its composition must depend; but we may here treat it as a play produced much about the same time as the Histories of which we have been speaking, however different from them in general conception and design. In one of those camp-scenes, in which the English dramatist contrived to add interest to his Homeric model (Act I, sc. iii), Ulysses discusses the reason why little or no progress has been made, during seven years, with the siege of Troy. It is to be found, he says, in the neglect, among the Greek force, of the "specialty of rule," and in the play allowed there to "hollow factions." When the general<sup>1</sup> is not like the hive to which all return from their expeditions, what honey can be expected? From this simile, also, as we have seen, employed in *All's Well that Ends Well* and in *Henry V*, Ulysses passes on to a most remarkable exposition of the doctrines of *degree* or order, as conditioning the organic life of communities, whether political or other<sup>2</sup>. There is an

<sup>1</sup> It is tempting to explain this to mean "the army"; but in the same speech the word occurs in the sense of the "commander."

<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare never tired of the word, or of the idea which he connected with it. See *The Winter's Tale* (Act II, sc. i).

unmistakable parallelism between this passage and one in the *Ecclesiastical Polity* (Book I, III, 2), which had certainly been written, and was probably published, before the production of *Troilus and Cressida*. This parallelism is no discovery; it had already, as Mr Gayley notes, been pointed out by Verplanck. At the same time, Shakespeare's lines are anything but a copy of Hooker's prose, which in this instance reaches an unsurpassed magnificence. The speech of Ulysses in the play, as Mr Gayley demonstrates in a special Appendix, is equally indebted to Chapman's Translation of the *Iliad*, of which the Second Book had appeared in 1598, and to Chaucer's *Troilus and Creseide*. From a passage in Ulysses's speech in Chapman's First Book, Shakespeare may have transferred the repeated pregnant employment, in this instance, of the term "degree." Elsewhere, very near the end of the Third Book of the same poem, to which Shakespeare must have had resort, Chaucer reproduces a passage from his own Translation of Boëthius *de Consolatione*, in which he treats Love, not Law, as the great organ of cosmic cohesion.

At this point, however, I must frankly express my regret at not being able to follow Mr Gayley further in his deductions from this investigation. It seems by no means unlikely that Shakespeare's strong sense of the value of political order and enduring social organisation was strengthened by his having become acquainted with such passages as those cited above. That in Chaucer he cannot but have read; that in Hooker might very well have come before his eyes. But we are unable to find herein any indication that, so far as either *Troilus*

and *Cressida* or *Coriolanus* (concerning which immediately) is concerned, Shakespeare was writing in anything like conscious agreement with the ideas which Sandys and others were seeking to constitute the bases of self-government in Virginia. Mr Gayley cautiously admits that Shakespeare was not referring to America; and it may be as well to pretermitt all suppositions as to his direct cognisance of, or sympathy with, "the movement for liberty in the New World as at home<sup>1</sup>."

It would lie beyond the bounds of my immediate purpose to enter here into a further enquiry, to which Mr Gayley invites us in a special Appendix, into the question (if it be such) of Shakespeare's indebtedness to the ethics and psychology, as distinct from the political and social philosophy, of Hooker. The particular play of *Troilus and Cressida*, as well as certain other plays—notably *Hamlet* and *Measure for Measure*—no doubt contains passages to which *analoga* may be pointed out in divers sections of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*. But, to use Mr Gayley's own very appropriate query, must

<sup>1</sup> By the way, in this very play of *Troilus and Cressida* (Act III, sc. iii) Ulysses declares, quite in the fashion of diplomacy after the school of Metternich, that

"There is a mystery, with whom relation  
Durst never meddle, in the soul of state;  
Which hath an operation more divine  
Than breath or pen can give expressure to."

It is amusing to find, in an interesting essay *On the Conception and Method of the History of States* by the eminent historian Fournier, the conclusion drawn that there are certain limits to all insight into the nature of States beyond which demonstration must give way to hypothesis, and that this is the *ultra posse* to which Shakespeare refers in the above passage.



counterparts be found "for reflections which might be common to the thought of the age?"

The last group of Shakespearean plays, belonging, in date of production, to the period from 1600 (or thereabouts) onwards might, *a priori*, be expected to have presented more abundant results of observation and imagination, as applied to political and social phenomena. But, as we call them to mind in something like their probable chronological order, we find such elements of the kind as they contain even more variously and "antithetically mixed." The irresistible humour and deep incidental pathos of *Much Ado about Nothing*, at the first performance of which, assuredly, "there was a star danced," cover nothing political; for to interpret Hero's comparison of "favourites made proud by princes" (Act III, sc. i) as referring to Essex, suits the date of the play better than what we can infer as the personal inclinations of its author<sup>1</sup>. Still less productive would be the search for such an element in the most purely poetical of all Shakespearean dramas, the enchanting *As You Like It*, all "made of passion and all made of wishes," and, we might add, "all purity"—or in *Twelfth Night*, which combines with many beauties a curious study in psychology<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The late Mr R. Simpson, accordingly, thought it referred to the Cecils.

<sup>2</sup> The interest attaching from this point of view, and also from that of his Puritan features, to Malvolio has been frequently noted. It must be added that there is an unmistakably—shall we say undemocratic—tone in this, as in some other Shakespearean plays. The unhappy Malvolio is only a steward, after all; Viola-Sebastian is "a gentleman. I'll be sworn thou art" (Act I, sc. v). Even the hero

With *Julius Caesar* we, from our present point of view, reach more interesting ground. While it would be difficult to trace in this stirring tragedy instances of comparative or, still more so, of constructive, political thought, Sir Sidney Lee is justified in pronouncing the entire drama a penetrating study of political life. Circumstances and personal character, no doubt, here determine the adoption and maintenance of particular political opinions; but these are held and expressed with perfect distinctness, and together illustrate the chief party divisions both of the period of the action, and of wider divisions of history. In his first great dialogue with Brutus (Act I, sc. ii) Cassius harps upon the argument that, in a republic, *one* great man must not be suffered to predominate—an argument suited to the atmosphere of a mixed polity which allows a share in its government to a “breed of noble bloods” rather than to that of a democracy pure and simple. Again, it is the recognition of Caesar as King from which Brutus shrinks as from an invitation to his great friend to endanger the safety of the State (Act II, sc. i). Caesar himself is all amiability to the conspirators when they wait on him to salute him (*ib.*, sc. ii); but, hardly has he set foot in the Senate house, when he justifies their design by a tyrannical “Know, Caesar doth not wrong,” and expounds at length his theory of personal monarchy (Act III, sc. i). In the speeches of Brutus after the deed is done, its motive cause, Caesar’s ambition to be King, is dwelt upon as persistently, as the mention of *Timon of Athens* (Act IV, sc. iii) draws a distinction between his own misanthropy and that of a “slave” who has not known the “sweet degrees that this brief world affords”—to the privileged classes.

it is avoided by Antony. It was "for justice sake"—i.e. for the sake of pure political principle—that, as Brutus declares, "great Caesar bled" (Act IV, sc. iii); and, on the Liberator's death, his adversary Antony acknowledges that, of all the conspirators, Brutus alone was actuated by

a general honest thought  
And common good to all (Act V, sc. v).

To reread this wonderful play is to perceive that it is not a people freeing itself from oppression whom we are here taught to honour, but a knot of "men that gave their country liberty" (Act III, sc. i), and among them "the noblest Roman"—and the most consistent Liberal *doctrinaire*—"of them all."

In *Measure for Measure*, we have a drama, next in date of production to *Julius Caesar*, which, in a very different way, indicates its author's attentiveness to political problems, though unaccompanied by any endeavour to solve them with convincing completeness. The opening lines—

Of government the properties to unfold  
Would seem in me to affect speech and discourse<sup>1</sup>—

apprise us that the opportunity of political demonstration offering itself will not be taken<sup>2</sup>. For the rest there is, as has been pointed out by Sir Sidney Lee, little

<sup>1</sup> A favourite word, as already noted, in the sense of "reasoning," with Shakespeare as with Hooker.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke's commission to Angelo, by the way, is sufficiently broad and elastic. He is, like the Duke himself,

"So to enforce or qualify the laws  
As to your soul seems good" (Act I, sc. i).

What benevolent despot could claim a more complete authority?



in the play, which seems to have been one of the dramatist's first personal offerings to the Court, that suggests a wish to commend it there by its political or social sentiments. To be sure, the Duke's abhorrence of mobs, despite his love for his people (Act I, sc. i), and Angelo's expression of the same dislike of seeing royalty crowded (Act II, sc. iv) may have appealed to King James I, who hated that sort of company almost as much as did King Lewis II of Bavaria. The most beautiful passage in Isabella's appeal to Angelo, and in the whole play, is based, not on political, or even on mere ethical, principle, but on the profoundest teaching of Christianity.

*Othello*, which might almost be called the unequalled early exemplar of domestic tragedy, neglects its chance of referring, or alluding, to the Venetian system of government, a subject of constant interest to many Englishmen (Nicholas Ferrar among them) in the age of its commencing decline. *Macbeth*, psychologically the most directly powerful of Shakespeare's tragedies, had the secondary purpose of gratifying the pride of Malcolm's reigning descendant; but, apart from this, it is surely "stretching a point too far" to find in the play—we presume in Macduff's indignant protest after the prince's fictitious self-accusation (Act IV, sc. iii)—a repudiation of the doctrine of the Right Divine of kings. Even the direct reprehension of those who flatter kings in *Pericles* (Act I, sc. ii) will hardly bear such a construction. Contrariwise, the thought of the Sovereign as father of *all* his people suggests itself with extraordinary force in *King Lear*. The greatest of all tragedies of pity contains no more touching passage

than that in which the royal outcast bethinks himself of the "poor naked wretches" of whose condition he has taken "too little care" (Act III, sc. iv). In view of the storm without and the storm within, this is a divergence from personal grief into sociological thought to which Philoctetes could have hardly risen.

There remain the plays of the final period. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, as in *Julius Caesar*, the chief personage of the tragedy is still of heroic type—a head and shoulders, as the phrase is, over common men, though not "a colossus," like his chief of old. But Antony, as it is borne in upon us from the first, is a falling, and soon will be a fallen, star, unable to master a world like Julius Caesar, or even to keep a hold over his third part of it. Thus, though hardly any other Shakespearean play is more full of shrewd political as well as of psychological observation<sup>1</sup>, no handle is sought or found for the introduction of political thought or principle. Shakespeare's contempt for the voices of the multitude reappears more emphatically than ever, and meets with summary expression by the great politician who, in the end, masters all the factions—Caesar Augustus himself. "It hath," he says, "been taught us from the primal state," that "in the common body" there is naught but instability and fickleness (Act I, sc. iv). Why, we seem

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., the remark of the politic general Ventidius—the prototype of many a celebrated general who has followed the same rule of conduct—that principals do not like to be surpassed by those holding a command under them (Act III, sc. i). Or see the scene in which Sextus Pompeius declines to do the deed, though he will gather in the fruits (Act II, sc. vii). It is unnecessary to add more than a reference to the psychological insight of the *Cleopatra* scenes.

half-tempted to ask, be at the pains of winning such a world?

Whether or not later in date of production than *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus* exhibits the same maturity of dramatic conception and execution, and more compactness of construction; while, with regard to our present subject of enquiry, it displays more clearly than any other of Shakespeare's plays his ways of thought concerning political life. This tragedy has been asserted to have been intended to demonstrate how the best form of government is equally free from the control of aristocratic arrogance and from subjection to the turbulence of the populace. But this judgment overlooks the circumstance that, while Coriolanus himself is by nature imperious and overweeningly self-confident, so that he

fails in the disposing of those chances

Which he was lord of (Act IV, sc. vii),

the other Patricians, and Menenius, the very embodiment of sagacity, in particular, share his political opinions, and only differ from him under the pressure of circumstance; whereas the motives of the Tribunes are as mean as their ways are crooked, and the minds of the many-headed are feeble and swayed to and fro by every successive gust. Although the dramatic conflict is thus, in its essence, ethical, no attempt is made to conceal the political bias of its presentment. Indeed, the pride of Coriolanus who "speaks of the people," as if he were, not merely a superior mortal, but "a god" (Act III, sc. i), is designedly coloured so highly as to contrast with a reasonable opposition to democratic principles. In return, Coriolanus himself raises an interesting



question of political history when (in the same scene) he compares the Roman with the Greek (Athenian) Constitution, to the disadvantage of the former, from the anti-democratic point of view. The guilt of Coriolanus was a moral guilt—his pride; that he aimed at Tyranny was a mere pretence of his enemies the Tribunes (Act III, sc. iii), whose own patriotism was one that “rack’d for Rome, to make coals cheap” (Act v, sc. i); but the far greater wrong which he commits by drawing his sword against his country, though he seeks to undo what he has begun, is inexpiable, and takes his case quite out of the range of mere politics.

In the super-romantic drama of *Cymbeline*, the accumulation of incident—probable and improbable, even to monstrosity—yet leaves room both for striking narrative passages and others of interest to “statists” (cf. Act II, sc. iv) and for conveying fine thoughts and sentiments, alike extremely undemocratic<sup>1</sup>. *The Winter’s Tale*, which internal evidence places very late in the list of Shakespeare’s plays, is not without a certain lengthiness which would help to defeat any effort to find in it instances of the assertion of definite political principles. The loyal Camillo refuses to obey his Sovereign’s command to murder his royal guest, even if he

<sup>1</sup> E.g. “Clay and clay differ in dignity

Where dust is both alike” (Act iv, sc. ii),

with the reflections of Belarius on the “invisible instincts” which “framed” his two princely wards to “royalty unlearn’d”; and the tribute to “reverence the angel of the world,” which “doth make distinction of place between high and low.” “Consider” writes Hooker, in a famous passage (*Eccl. Pol.*, Bk I, sec. iv, 2), “the Angels of God associated, and their law is that which disposeth them as an army, one in order and degree above another.”

could find example of thousands who had found themselves none the worse for an act of regicide (Act I, sc. ii); and King Leontes, while he nakedly advances the claims of absolute monarchy, opines that after all, the main thing is to possess the power<sup>1</sup>. Yet here and there, in the lovely pastoral scenes, glimpses are to be found of that lesson of equality which beneficent Nature herself teaches:

The self-same sun that shines upon his court  
Hides not his visage from our cottage (Act IV, sc. iii)<sup>2</sup>.

And so, whether or not we may regard it as an established fact that *The Tempest* in its final form dates from 1613, we come once more to what no lover of Shakespeare will consent to regard as other than his last play. We have seen that the opening of *The Tempest*, original in every other sense of the word, was beyond all doubt taken from a Virginian letter, and that Caliban knew something of the troubles of the early English settlers in the colony. But, as a whole, this wonderful play, from which, if from any of Shakespeare's dramas, we might feel inclined to draw general conclusions as to his world of thought in the maturity of his genius, contains no reference to politics—or for that matter, to religion, with which in this age, more than in any other, politics were so unintermittently blended. At Milan, Naples, and no doubt in other “residential” capitals, Duke succeeds Duke and King follows upon King, as

<sup>1</sup> See Act II, sc. i, as to his “prerogative,” and *ib.*, sc. iii, as to his being called a tyrant.

<sup>2</sup> As well as of the social satire which always commends itself to the lowly: “Not swear it,” says the Clown, “now I am a gentleman?” (Act V, sc. ii).

Amurath to Amurath succeeds, and the people are of little or no account. The Enchanted Island, indeed, is unpeopled; though on shipboard, even in the storm, occasions arise for differences between passengers and crew. Thus, questions of Constitution, land-tenure, employment, and the like, in the island are mere Utopian visions, without any reference to Milan, or Great Britain, or (as Mr Gayley is half-disposed to suggest) to "the Virginian fiasco"—the fiasco, i.e., which Virginia escaped through the reforms of Dale and Gates.

The present paper has extended to so great and (probably) to so wearisome a length, that a very brief deduction from its concluding survey is all that I can ask leave to add. Concerning the politics of Shakespeare I have long held a view that has been confirmed by more than one recently published study of his life and art—free from what I will venture to call the pedantry of certain earlier schools of Shakespeare criticism, which deserve that censure precisely where they claimed to set up criteria eminently suited to the requirements of superior minds. First and foremost, we should always remember that Shakespeare is the greatest of dramatic artists, and that whatever principle, maxim, or experience finds utterance in his plays should be read in the light of the *dramatis personae* from whom it proceeds—be they Hamlet or Polonius, or any less complex characters than either of these. It is they who speak—and think—in the first instance, and not the author of their being. In the second place, Shakespeare was an incomparable observer, not only of the ways of men and women, but of their thoughts and feelings, and of those that had found utterance in the speech or writings of his own



and former generations of Englishmen, in which politics past and present always had a large share; and both for the cutting and for the setting of these "gems" (as our later ancestors and ancestresses loved to call them in their collections) his was a master-hand beyond that of any other English writer. Finally, however, let us allow that the very nature of his art as a dramatist, doubled as it was with that of actor, offered him constant opportunities of giving play to his personal beliefs and convictions, preferences and prejudices in this field, as well as in others, of comment or exemplification; and that, though we know him to have possessed the quality of reserve which is characteristic of all great minds, and which, moreover, the circumstances of his personal career imposed upon him, he was at the same time conspicuous for the freedom of speech which (we shall agree) is, likewise, at least a frequent sign of greatness. Thus, he was always patriotic, and always—not only when he wore scarlet as a member of King James's household—loyal; while the conditions of his profession made him dependent upon great nobles, whose ways and manners it was but natural for him to prefer to those of popular throngs. He was—could he help it?—an aristocrat by nature; but he was no follower of party, faction, or sect. The idea of an antithesis between moral duties and political principles had not occurred to him; and in his judgment of the course of public affairs, as in the conduct of his own manhood, he stood, one and whole, in Church and State, steadfastly on the side of Degree or Order, the dispensation of God to man, and therefore on the side of Ordered Freedom, as against that of the inevitable sequence of

faction, tyranny, and mob-rule. Whether and in whatever proportions he and the Makers of Virginia had learnt these convictions from the same great teacher, they, like him, had derived them from the same ever-flowing Source.

In this enquiry I may seem to have left aside one aspect of the relations between the Makers of Virginia, on the one hand, and Hooker and Shakespeare, on the other. But the question whether the plays of Shakespeare in any way reflect the interaction between the Puritan movement, in its successive phases, and English life and thought in the period of his chief productivity, I must leave over for discussion on a subsequent opportunity, and by a more competent lecturer.

## II. BEN JONSON'S PROSE

(Craik's *English Prose*, vol. II, 1894<sup>1</sup>.)

APART from his dramatic prose, which, as he would readily have asseverated, "none but himself" could have produced, Ben is entitled to some sort of niche of his own among our prose writers. It may be going rather far to say, like his most recent biographer Dr Herford, that "no other contemporary prose equals the *Discoveries* in ripe wisdom or sinewy vigour"; for, whatever opinion may be held concerning the claims of aphoristic composition, Ben Jonson's only extant prose work (allowing for what remains of the *English Grammar*) can hardly be said to belong to any other species. If it, more or less remotely, "approaches the type of the Baconian Essay," it savours far more noticeably of the qualities pervading the *collectanea* of Jonson's friend and master Camden, the scholar extolled by him for his skill and faith

in things;

[His] sight in searching the most antique springs.

Yet it would be a short-sighted exclusiveness which should altogether shut the doors of the temple of classic prose to the literature of annotations, albeit the contributions of so many dunces have swelled its total bulk. At all events, we have no other prose (outside his plays and their paraphernalia) remaining from Ben Jonson's prolific pen. His *English Grammar*, patriotically designed

To teach some that their nurses could not do,

The purity of Language—

was consumed, together with much else which posterity

<sup>1</sup> *English Prose Selections*. Edited by [Sir] Henry Craik. Vol. II. Macmillan and Co. 1894.



has more keenly regretted, by the fatal conflagration commemorated in his genial *Execration upon Vulcan*; and only its dry bones or materials, including, however, an instructive series of quotations, have come down to us. His unpublished Translation of Barclay's *Argenis*—that typical scholar's delight, the last book of which the hand of Leibniz turned the pages—has likewise passed out of reach.

But the *Discoveries*, which "contain matter" like everything from their author's pen, will serve. They, very evidently, belong to his declining years, when, though his creative powers were on the wane, his critical faculty, in which he had stood supreme among his fellows, was stronger and more conscious of its strength than ever. With a great reverence for authority, such as that of the ancients in literary matters, he combined a perfectly fearless independence of thought and judgment; and while as full of reading as he was of experience of life, he digested whatever he read, and was no mere walking mirror of Fleet Street. Thus, although the *Discoveries* contain little or nothing that is original in the sense of being absolutely new, they fully justify their claim to have "flowed out of his daily readings, *or had their reflux to his peculiar notion of the times.*" It is the prerogative of a mind so powerful, so well equipped and so well balanced as his, to be able to form and express all its judgments in its own way and style, and thus to stamp each of its criticisms with that other kind of originality which renders them invariably interesting.

The complement of Ben Jonson's *Discoveries* is his so-called *Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden*, as reported by his host unextenuatingly,

but presumably with a touch here and there heightened, and a qualification here and there left out. In these discourses, or heads of discourse, there are passages which once more irresistibly remind us of Jonson's great later namesake, or rather (since it would be an error to regard these *Conversations* as more than the merest rough notes of Ben's actual talk) which suggest that the same versatility, the same precision, and the same force marked much of the spoken as well as of the written criticism of both. Neither in the Devil Tavern nor in the Mitre was the law laid down with a waste of words or with a side-appeal to the audience; and it is this freedom of spirit, born of self-knowledge and of good faith, to which both the one and the other of these great critics owed their "dictatorships." Beyond a doubt, there are other passages in the *Conversations*, as condensed by Drummond, perhaps after suffering from his part of *auditor tantum*, which are mainly attributable to bile, and resemble some of the incidental utterances of Carlyle—of Annandale stock like Ben. Such are the pronouncements: "That Sharpham, Day, Dekker, were all rogues, and that Minsheu was one." "That Abraham Fraunce, in his English Hexameters, was a fool."

But of this there is nothing in the *Discoveries*, which are marked by genuine sobriety of spirit as well as by a dignity of tone not least noticeable in so personal a passage as the fine reference to the poet's own career cited in our text. At the same time, the general style of these aphorisms, or notes for essays never intended to be written, is quite unforced; and we may perhaps have reason to be glad that they were not over-elaborated for publication.

## 12. INTRODUCTION TO *A WOMAN KILLED WITH KINDNESS*<sup>1</sup>

OF the life of Thomas Heywood but little is known; its chief interest lies in the extraordinary amount, and the hardly less extraordinary diversity, of his literary labours. Born somewhere about the beginning of the last quarter of the 16th century, he survived to the middle of the 17th, or at all events to a time not far distant from that date; and, after having chronicled the glories of Elizabeth in both prose and verse, he lived to do literary homage to Henrietta Maria. Yet although, it would seem, gently born, and according to a cherished tradition bred a scholar in the most ancient college of the University of Cambridge, he became a professional playwright-actor, and, so far at least as is known, never repented his choice of a calling. When at the height of his activity, he is said to have performed almost every day; and he is known to have disliked seeing his plays in print, inasmuch as he had neither time nor inclination for revising them himself with a view to a more select public than that for which they were frankly intended. Yet that he was by no means devoid of literary ambition, is shown by the circumstance that the list of his non-dramatic publications begins in 1628 with a Translation of Sallust, and extends to 1641; indeed, during the later years of his life there are indications of his having at

<sup>1</sup> The Temple Dramatists. *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. A Play written by Thomas Heywood. Introduction. J. M. Dent and Co., 1897.



last begun to grow weary of the stage, before there had ceased to exist a stage to be weary of.

At last—for Mr Fleay cannot be permitted to explain away Thomas Heywood's statement that he had "had either an entire hand, or at least a main finger," in two hundred-and-twenty plays, by the suggestion that these eleven score included all those in which he had acted during nearly thirty years, and had either introduced "gag" or recommended alterations. When the length of Heywood's connexion with the Theatre is taken into account, as well as the fact that, of the thirty-five actually extant plays (not, of course, counting the Pageants) in which he certainly had an entire hand or a finger, not a single one shows traces of elaboration and very few so much as a conscious effort at style, the claim can hardly be considered phenomenal; nor are analogies wanting, either in our own or in other theatrical literatures. The variety of the subjects and of the dramatic species to which Heywood addressed himself, cannot in itself be held to increase the wonderfulness of his fecundity. As a non-dramatic author, he showed the same gaiety of heart, or Little-John readiness for any kind of combat—heroic poem and prose apologetic pamphlet, elegy and epithalamium, nine books of feminine biography founded on history and poetry, the same number (comprising a surprising amount of useless learning) on *The Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels*, besides a straightforward life of Queen Elizabeth and a variety of elegant extracts in the way of Translations from the Classics. But these productions are beyond the scope of criticism, and, with the exception of the pleasing rather than powerful *Apology for Actors* (1612), possess little more

than an antiquarian interest. Very different is the case with his dramas.

As a playwright, Heywood began to earn money from Henslowe as early as 1596; but it is probable that he had set his hand to this sort of task even earlier, when quite fresh from Peterhouse, where he must be supposed to have left behind him his Fellowship, if in truth he had ever held one. He was naturally enough intent upon pleasing the public nearest at hand, and there was an additional reason for his eyes being turned City-wards, since his engagement with Henslowe in 1598 is attested by Anthony Munday, whose reputation as "pageant poet to the City" has overshadowed Meres' encomium of him as the "best plotter" among the playwrights of his day. Heywood's own Pageants for Lord Mayor's Day belong to the later years of his life (1631-39); in his younger days it was the most susceptible part of the City public to which he specially addressed himself. His *Four Prentices of London, with the Conquest of Jerusalem*, proved so enduringly popular that Beaumont and Fletcher thought it worth their while to parody it ten or eleven years after its first production<sup>1</sup>; his *Edward IV* (two *Parts*) celebrates the achievements and delinquencies of a national Sovereign in whose popular qualities (including their defects) the City took particular delight; and his *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody, or The Troubles of Queen Elizabeth*, brings into special prominence the additions made under the Queen's rule to the architectural glories of "lovely London." But, already in the second of these Chronicle Histories—for in their general method of

<sup>1</sup> In *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1611 c.).

treatment and unadorned directness of style these plays may fairly be classed as such—Heywood had found an opportunity for exhibiting, in the episode of the erring and penitent Jane Shore, his most signal dramatic quality—a natural pathos which at once touches the common spring of tears. This play was produced in 1599 or 1600; and, having once discovered the vein that was in him, Heywood was not the man to leave it long unworked. We are without distinct evidence as to which of his next two plays, *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, was the earlier in date, but the play printed in this volume was certainly on the stage in 1603 (N.S.). Henslowe, in his *Diary*<sup>1</sup>, entered among his accounts with the Earl of Worcester's players, the following memoranda:

P<sup>d</sup> at the apoyntment of the company, the 6 of marche 1602, unto Thomas Hewode, in fulle payment for his play called a woman Kyld with Kyndnes, the some of . . . . . iij<sup>li</sup> and

P<sup>d</sup> at the apoyntment of Thomas Blackewod, the 7 of marche 1602, unto the tayller which made the blacke satten sewt for the woman Kyld with Kyndnes, the some of . . . . . x<sup>s</sup>

We are not enabled to name among the theatres in which Henslowe was interested—the Rose, the Fortune, or others—the one where this play was produced.

The sentiment of *The Royal King and the Loyal Subject*, although noble in conception, is tinged with artificiality; and, although this is undoubtedly one of Heywood's most attractive pieces, the manner may be said to border more closely upon the heroic than is

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 249, 250 (Collier's edition). From the accession of James I onwards Lord Worcester's players were known as Queen Anne's.



usual in his extant productions. With our play, on the other hand, he had found his way into his most proper field, the domestic drama; and in this line his most conspicuous later successes were achieved. *The English Traveller*, although apparently much later in date (it is not known to have been printed before 1633), offers many resemblances to *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, with which, but for its improbable and rather wearisome underplot, it might well be placed in competition; and, in the character of Young Geraldine, Heywood succeeded in embodying once more, but without copying from his previous pieces, the true conception of a Christian gentleman, which had inspired him when drawing the character of Frankford in the masterpiece of his earlier manhood. We may further, and without paradox, reckon as belonging, in a measure, to the domestic drama—because of their homely background of English middle-class life—the series of comedies which elsewhere I have, assuredly, not misdescribed as “comedies of adventure,” and of which the breeziest is the delightful *Fair Maid of the West*—an Elizabethan sea-piece that, if he ever read it, Charles Kingsley must have enjoyed, in spite of the Puritans<sup>1</sup>.

I do not know that any other of Heywood's dramatic productions calls for separate notice here except, perhaps, *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*. In *The Late Lancashire Witches*, which has a historical interest of its own, he cooperated with Brome. The former play, too, shows traces of the school of Jonson in its depiction of contemporary manners; in construction, it is

<sup>1</sup> *Fortune by Land and Sea*, in which Heywood was assisted by William Rowley, is of a similar make.

the cleverest of Heywood's plays, but the complication and its disentanglement are those of farce. We have every reason for believing Heywood's modesty to have been such as to forbid our thinking of him as specially satisfied with any of his dramatic productions; otherwise, he might have plumed himself upon the copious illustrations of his classical learning furnished by *The Four Ages*, or have taken a more legitimate pride in the success of his masque *Love's Mistress*, which was repeated three times in eight days before King James and Queen Anne, and contained passages wherein the writer perhaps approached nearer to poetic beauty than in anything else of his composition. He was, one fears, too devoted a "servant of the public" to have looked back with remorse upon his *Rape of Lucrece*, or rather upon the diversion introduced by him into the tragic story in the shape of Valerius, an ancient Roman furnished with a whole budget of popular comic songs.

Because Thomas Heywood was unassuming; because as a dramatist he must have written at such speed<sup>1</sup>, and with so little thought of any but theatrical success, as to render him indifferent to theories and rules with regard to which his contemporaries were already beginning to disturb themselves and abuse one another; because he was for the most part careless whether this style or that, whether prose or verse, best became his theme so long as it best served his turn—it by no means follows that he was in the true sense of the word a hack-writer. What makes the hack is the mechanical performance of the imposed task, whatever be its nature—

<sup>1</sup> Mr Fleay (*Life of Shakespeare*, 223-4) thinks that Marston in *Histrionmastix* satirised Heywood as Post-haste.

an uninspired and uninspiring self-accommodation which is no doubt largely due to force of habit, but to which a native dulness of soul contributes, together with the impulses of hunger and thirst. Heywood, doubtless, very rarely had time to consider what it was that he was set, or set himself, to turn into a play; but he often showed genius in the way in which he carried through the process. Herein, it is true, he resembled the greatest of his fellow-dramatists, of whom it has been so well said<sup>1</sup>, that "at the moment when he views any object, a flood of light and warmth is thrown over it from the passing sun of genius." Heywood's was indeed a less potent radiancy; and if there was in him anything comparable to Shakespeare, it was, as Charles Lamb's celebrated phrase implied, but as prose is comparable with poetry. Consequently, instead of soaring aloft in one of those sudden imaginative flights which carry away the reader or spectator with the poet into higher realms of thought or fancy, but which in Shakespeare, at the same time, often mark situations of great dramatic interest, Heywood is apt to take refuge in a pregnant proverb, or proverbial phrase, thus inopportunately giving a trivial turn to his style<sup>2</sup>. Yet, this difference

<sup>1</sup> By Lockhart. See Andrew Lang's *Life* (1896), vol. I, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, Act IV, sc. iii, *ad fin.*, where Mistress Frankford, on the eve of her catastrophe, says to her lover:

"Come, come, let's in;

Once over shoes, we're straight o'er head in sin."

In sc. vi, her husband, wishing that he could once more

"Take her

As spotless as an angel in my arms,"

confesses to himself that he "casts beyond the moon." The reader will not fail to notice several proverbs, or proverbial phrases, besides the above, in the course of this single play.



being granted, who shall deny that Heywood, too, was at times capable of penetrating to the very heart of men and things, and that, to the emotions within the range of his treatment, he, too, was by the gift of nature, enabled to appeal with irresistible effect?

The dramatic species of which *A Woman Killed with Kindness* is one of the earliest, as it is one of the most notable, examples, was not invented by Thomas Heywood. It would be easy to show that, from the days of the Moralities onwards, English writers of plays frequently strove to bring home to their audiences the lessons they desired to enforce with the aid of familiar associations of time and place; while, at the same time, the emotions which they sought to stir and the sentiments on which they insisted were, in the main, of the kind called into play by incidents such as gain rather than lose force from the frequency of their occurrence in the familiar sphere of daily life.

When, after substituting real human characters for personified abstractions of good or evil qualities, our early dramatists proceeded to allow a real dramatic fable to furnish forth the action of their plays, family life and its homely range of emotions continued to serve their purpose in "interludes" like Thomas Ingelend's *Disobedient Child*, which, although in manner still belonging to the age of the Moralities, may with regard to tone and tendency be described as in germ a domestic drama of sentiment. And, again, when in the last decade of the 16th century the English drama had attained to the full vigour of its productivity, borrowing its themes from the whole range of history ancient and modern, from the legend and the fiction of all ages and countries, and from the multitudinous movement of contemporary

life, it is not wonderful that several of our playwrights should have sought to compass strong theatrical effects by the treatment of subjects at once interesting and homely, chosen from the sphere of private or family life, and suggestive of the sympathy attaching itself to any tale of eventful experiences in accustomed surroundings. A stimulus may have been added to the choice of such themes by the growing activity of the Press, which, by means of pamphlets and broadsheets, drew public attention to startling, or as we should call them, "sensational," domestic crimes. Thus it came to pass that in this and the immediately ensuing periods an unusual number of what may be called domestic dramas were produced on the stage. Not a few of these were at one time or another attributed to the hand of Shakespeare; among them *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*—a play founded on an ancient and versatile legend locally associated with a hero who had received his University education in the Cambridge College of which Thomas Heywood himself had been a member<sup>1</sup>—*The London Prodigal*, and *The Miseries of Enforced Marriage*, which latter is known to have been written by George Wilkins<sup>2</sup>. Two other plays which have been attributed to Shakespeare, and in which I am myself inclined to think that

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Middleton, in his prose tract *The Black Book* (1604), describes a city madam who, "being set out of the shop, with her man before her, to quench the jealousy of her husband...shall turn the honest, simple fellow off at the next turning, and give him leave to see *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* or *A Woman killed with Kindness*, when his mistress is going to the same murder." Mr Fleay thinks *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* an early play by Drayton.

<sup>2</sup> See, as to the probability that both these plays were first performed in London in 1604, Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 148-9.

he was in some measure concerned, viz. *Arden of Feversham* and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*, likewise fall under the category of the domestic drama. But these belong to the special subdivision of it treating of actual events, whose terribly startling character had caused printed accounts of them to circulate more or less widely as narratives of popular interest<sup>1</sup>. Shakespeare was, I think, in some measure, concerned in these—but as reviser or adapter only, not as having himself conceived the dramatic treatment of such themes. His whole nature as a dramatic poet disdained the trammels which they inevitably impose upon the imagination; only once, and then in a style which widens and deepens the entire method of treatment, is he known to have essayed a subject of what may be called domestic drama—though it would obviously be preposterous to reckon *Othello* as belonging to the species known under that name<sup>2</sup>.

Other contemporary dramatists of note, if they did not consciously essay as a species the domestic drama of sentiment, unmistakably sought a main element of effect in direct appeals to the strong emotions most readily evoked by direct analogies of everyday experience. Among these, it will suffice to note Thomas Dekker, a

<sup>1</sup> Another play of this type is *A Warning to Faire Women* (pr. 1599), which purports in its title-page to treat of *The most tragical and lamentable Murther of Master George Sanders, of London, Merchant, nigh Shooter's Hill, assented unto by his own Wife, and acted by Mr Brown, Mrs Drewry, and Trusty Roger, Agents therein; with their severall Ends*. (The event happened in 1573.) This play has been attributed to Lyly, and more recently (by Mr Fleay) to Lodge.

<sup>2</sup> See some admirable observations in G. Brandes' *William Shakespeare* (German translation, 1896), pp. 152-3, 270-1, 632.



thoroughly popular writer in the breadth and versatility of his sentiment, and Thomas Middleton, the fertile receptivity of whose genius almost made up for what it may have lacked in depth<sup>1</sup>.

That among these and cognate efforts of the same period of the English Drama, the play by Thomas Heywood here reprinted should hold a preeminence virtually undisputed, unless it be on behalf of the other play from the same hand, adverted to above<sup>2</sup>, is I think due to their approaching nearer to modern taste than the rest; and this effect, again, they manifestly owe to the naturalness of the softer kind of emotion with which they are charged. In the Prologue to *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, Heywood with unusual distinctness announces that the theme of his play is taken from ordinary life, but that by way of foil to the subject, he offers sentiment as a kindly substitute for the cothurnate style<sup>3</sup>.

Heywood himself and his contemporaries alike recognised in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* a typical example of the sentimental family drama. In *The Wise Woman of Hogsdon* (Act III, sc. ii), Young Charlton,

<sup>1</sup> Dekker's *The Honest Whore* (two parts) is the play that I have here chiefly in mind. Middleton is supposed to have collaborated with him in this. Middleton and William Rowley's *A Fair Quarrel*, and perhaps also *The Changeling*, may be likewise taken into account.

<sup>2</sup> *The English Traveller*.

<sup>3</sup> See Prologue:

"Look for no glorious state (i.e. throne): our Muse is bent  
Upon a barren subject, a bare scene";

and again:

"Gentle thoughts, when they may give the foil,  
Save them that yield, and spare where they may spoil."

"a wild-headed gentleman," thus addresses the rather lachrymose father of a girl with whom he has trifled:

Well I see you choleric hasty men are the kindest when all's done. Here's such wetting of handkerchiefs! he weeps to think of his wife; she weeps to see her father cry! Peace, fool! we shall else have thee claim kindred of the woman killed with kindness.

The satirical application in *The Taming of the Shrew* of the phrase which gives its title to our play—

This is the way to kill a wife with kindness—

(see Petruchio's speech, Act IV, sc. ii)—seems to show that the phrase was older than Heywood's drama, the production of which must be dated several years earlier than that of the old comedy recast by Shakespeare<sup>1</sup>. The expression is, also, used ironically in a general sort of way in Fletcher's *Night-Walker*, acted as "corrected" by Shirley in 1634 (Act III, sc. iii):

My daughter, that thou kill'st with kindness, Jew.

On the other hand, Fletcher can hardly but have been thinking of the action of Heywood's play, when, in *The Woman's Prize*, acted as an "old play" in 1633 (Act III, sc. iv), he makes Petruchio, while discussing the ills *which wives inflict upon husbands*, say:

Some few,  
For those are rarest, they are said to kill  
With kindness and fair usage.

Farquhar, in his *Love and a Bottle* (1698), puts into the mouth of his wild Irish man-upon-town Roebuck the

<sup>1</sup> The date of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* is of course uncertain; but I cannot think that it should be placed later than 1596-7.

humorous phrase as to a former flame: "I bear her an amorous grudge still, something between love and spite. I could kill her with kindness" (Act III, sc. i).

Whether or not some anecdote of real life may have happened to suggest it to him, Heywood chose for the theme of his play a story of sin and shame unhappily neither improbable in itself nor uncommon as an experience of ordinary life. The happiness of an honourable and trustful gentleman is overthrown by the treason of a friend on whom he has lavished hospitality and courtesy. He discovers his wife in the arms of this friend; whereupon—and here we have at once the original turn in the plot, and the victory of loftier over lower motives which constitutes the supreme effect of the play—he resolves to show mercy and, as he says, to "kill her even with kindness." How well the dramatist succeeds in the design thus expressed with pathetic irony is shown with powerful simplicity in the last act of the play.

Heywood, in casting this story into a dramatic form, has allowed himself the utmost freedom in dealing with considerations of time, his one purpose being to bring before the spectator each successive step (so to speak) leading to the brink of the abyss where a Higher Hand arrests the vengeance that is in accordance with the Law. By means of a few, but perfectly sufficient, touches, he depicts the happiness of the husband, the weakness of the wife, his growing suspicions of her frailty<sup>1</sup>, and the

<sup>1</sup> The scene in which the husband, the wife, and the seducer play at cards (Act III, sc. ii) forms an exception, in so far as an opportunity is there found for the exercise of an ingenuity which, but for such wit as might be found in it, could only irritate a more



awful certainty of the discovery. At the very height of the action, powerfully as it is contrived, we cannot but think that a nicer calculation, for which probably neither Heywood nor his audiences would have greatly cared to allow themselves time, might have led him to avoid two instances of oversight. Although it is in accordance with our sentiment that Frankford should pardon his wife, we should not perhaps quite so easily make up our minds to fall in with his pardoning her paramour, and it would have been easy to allow Wendoll to escape without Frankford's quasi-connivance. Again, the husband's renunciation of his right to punish his guilty wife, although open to misinterpretation, should not be so misinterpreted in the play, least of all by the person most concerned; yet the author inadvertently makes Mistress Frankford say to herself, before he has announced his sentence—

He cannot be so base as to forgive me

(Act IV, sc. vi).

I do not notice the criticism, that Frankford's previous affection for Wendoll might seem to exceed the limits of probability; for the Elizabethans were not wont to shrink from exaggerations of this sort, when desirous of producing a marked impression<sup>1</sup>, as here, of the kindness critical audience than that which Heywood was bent upon pleasing. I have elsewhere noted that this scene may have suggested a not dissimilar one in Machin's *The Dumb Knight* (Act IV), printed 1608, and that certain analogies may also be found in Chapman's *Byron's Tragedy* (Act IV), and—though here, of course, the intention is comic—in Fletcher's *The Spanish Curate* (Act III, sc. iv).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. in *The English Traveller* Wincott's overflowing affection for Young Geraldine, in which instance, however, the object is worthy of the sentiment.

destined to meet with so treacherous a return. And no touch could be more subtle than that of the deluded husband turning to his half-astonished wife:

Pr'ythee, Nan,

Use him with all thy loving'st courtesy

(Act II, sc. i). He addresses her, it will be observed (for the first time in the course of the play), by the familiar name which afterwards springs to his lips in the moment of anguish, and again in that of the last farewell<sup>1</sup>. But such touches of nature are common in Heywood, and it is superfluous to point them out to any sympathetic reader. Less expected of its kind is the satirical turn in the parting speech of the villain of the play, who, being driven abroad to wander like Cain, proposes to learn the chief continental languages and then return to an appropriate sphere of activity at home, where

My worth and parts being by some great man praised,  
At my return I may in court be raised.

The author thus takes occasion to remind his public of the corruption in high places that formed so signal a feature of the age. But the general atmosphere in which the action of this piece moves is of a wholly different nature; and, with the aid, more especially of the opening scene of the bye-plot, where we assist at a hawking-match between two country gentlemen, we are transplanted into the very heart of English country life<sup>2</sup>. And the fresh air of the country-side seems to blow through passages of this play, as it does through

<sup>1</sup> Act IV, sc. vi; Act V, sc. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Heywood, however, never quite forgets his London associations. One of these is most grotesquely introduced in Act IV, sc. v, when Nicholas, the faithful serving-man (an excellent character); asserts

Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. In general, it is noticeable how true and vivid is the colouring—whether of town or country—which our author is able to impart to his backgrounds<sup>1</sup>. I am not aware that, in the present instance, Heywood need be supposed to have had either his native Lincolnshire or any other special part of the country in his eye; the locality where the scene is actually laid is Yorkshire<sup>2</sup>.

If the bye-plot of Heywood's play is brought to a termination which cannot perhaps be described as satisfying a very high ethical standard, it is at least fairly interesting, and fitted with more than ordinary skill into the scheme of the play as a whole. The unity of tone which the action maintains is, of course, not absolute, and was not intended to be such; indeed, the author prophesies in his Epilogue that opinions concerning the play will vary as they do over a bottle of wine, and that some will judge it

too trivial, some too gay.

himself as clown, when his master is about to open the door of his outraged bed-chamber, by interposing: "It must ope with far less noise than Cripple-gate, or your plot's dashed."

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, the picture of Plymouth before the sailing of the Azores Expedition, in Act I of *The Fair Maid of the West*; Barnet on market-day, in Act III of *The English Traveller*, etc., etc.

<sup>2</sup> The hawking-match takes place at "Chevy Chase" (see Act I, sc. i), which is hardly to be identified with the famous Northumbrian locality. Wendoll says (Act II, sc. iii) that Frankford has made him

"Companion with the best and chiefest

In Yorkshire";

Sir Charles Mountford is said to lie in gaol in York Castle (Act IV, sc. ii), and Frankford pretends to have to ride to York on assize business of his own (*ib.*).



But, throughout its course, the simple and direct force of a style asserts itself, which neither seeks nor avoids occasional vehemence or occasional humility of expression; whose eloquence is unadorned; whose wit and humour, when opportunity occurs for the use of those qualities, are the reverse of far-fetched; and whose pathos, above all, is Nature's own. When, in another age, Sentimental Comedy gained credit through the works of Steele, similar qualities of style cooperated to this end with the same simple morality, the same rectitude of judgment, and the same tenderness of feeling, as those which pervade *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. Later literary developments of the dramatic species to which Heywood's masterpiece belongs cannot here be pursued, and the most powerful influence which, in Goethe's words<sup>1</sup>, "directed the attention of the middle-class world to a more refined system of morality," proceeded, not from the Stage, but from the more elaborate achievements of the English 18th-century Novel. The name of Thomas Heywood was probably wholly unknown to Richardson; but the sentiment of *Clarissa Harlowe* and that of *A Woman Killed with Kindness* are derived from the same source, and will never fail to call forth a cognate response of universal human sympathy.

<sup>1</sup> See *Wahrheit und Dichtung*, Book XIII.

### 13. JAMES SHIRLEY<sup>1</sup>

SHIRLEY is the last among the great writers of our old Drama—*extremus primorum* by the reckoning of time, but assuredly, and in spite of some half-forgotten obloquy, entitled to a lasting place among them. Although he survived for some years the reopening of the theatres, by which the Restoration was accompanied or preceded, his productivity as a dramatist had come to an end with their suppression. Too much might perhaps be made of the fact that, unlike the D'Avenants and Killigrews, he declined to suit himself to the more exacting requirements and more pronounced tastes of the new generation. His facile powers and receptive disposition, open to the influence of foreign as well as of native examples, would have found no great difficulty in following the critical canons, invented or imported, by which the later Stewart Drama regulated its process of decay. And, though he was a poet not only of refined feeling but of earnest purpose, he had in his day too readily given way to license, to have been likely to resist very sternly the current of a "lubrique and adulterate age." Yet he was, at least, fortunate in the limits of time within which his literary record is actually contained; and under no aspect was he more clearly at the height of his art, than in his unique appreciation of the great qualities of the dramatic period to which he belonged. Shirley was not merely a well-read man, but a trained

<sup>1</sup> Gayley's *Representative English Comedies*. Vol. III, *The Royal Master*. Introduction. New York. Macmillan and Co. 1914.

scholar ; and his practical experience in teaching, which, after the manner of exiles, he sought to turn to account in later days of misfortune, must have added to his quickness in the use of his book-learning. He could lay his finger upon a passage in Homer or Horace, and was reminiscent of *La Mort d'Arthure*, as well as of Sidney and Spenser. As will be noticed in connexion with the plots of some of his plays, he was specially familiar with Spanish literature, of which he had probably imbibed the love at Oxford, where it continued to be cherished during nearly the whole of his lifetime. But to his constant and cordial delight in the great English dramatists, of whom he was an immediate successor or with whom he was actually contemporary, scarcely a single work of his fails in one way or another to testify. In the case of *The Spanish Tragedy*, the tribute of repeated quotation is no doubt alloyed by ironical intention ; but no disrespect is implied by the hackneying of words winged merely for a stage-flight. To *Endimion*, a play which still fascinates by something besides the artificial graces of Lyly's dialogue, Shirley seems to allude at the opening of one of his own most brilliantly written comedies (*The Example*). One of his masques or entertainments (*The Triumph of Beauty*) treats part of the theme of Peele's *Arraignment of Paris*, and directly imitates the farcical portion of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. Speaking generally, no other writer of the Elizabethan or early Stewart period exhibits a familiarity approaching Shirley's with the plays of Shakespeare, whom, in the pathetic Prologue to *The Sisters*, he names first among the great masters of the dramatic art, now forsaken in the sad season of war. His comedies are



full of references or allusions to every kind of figure in the Shakespearean drama—to Hamlet and Polonius, to Shylock, Malvolio, Falstaff, Pandarus, Parolles and “goodman Verges”; and, frequently, the profound sententiousness or the exquisite music of a Shakespearean passage or phrase finds a half-conscious echo in his verse. Of Jonson he spoke as his “acknowledged master”; but although, as will be noted, he occasionally sets up a background or introduces a character modelled upon the master’s manner, there was little that was really congenial to the younger writer in the humorous creations of the veteran “to whose name wise art did bow.” To Fletcher, on the other hand, he was drawn by what may, on the whole, notwithstanding indisputable divergence, be termed a close affinity of genius. He was the author of the address *To the Reader* prefixed to the first (1647) folio edition of Beaumont and Fletcher, which was designed as a light of consolation and encouragement in the midst of gathering gloom; nor is it always easy in the case of Fletcher’s plays to be sure what is owing to the congenial touch of Shirley’s revising hand. His indebtedness to Chapman (in *The Ball*) can have been but slight; but the influence of Webster has been rightly traced in what Shirley accounted the best of his tragedies (*The Cardinal*), while a signally effective situation in Thomas Heywood’s masterpiece must have suggested a passage in one of Shirley’s cleverest comedies (*Hyde Park*).

In his masques and other entertainments, he followed the changing fashions of his times. *The Triumph of Peace*, “offered” to the King and Queen in 1634 by the four Inns of Court, and intended by its extraordinary

splendour to defy the attacks of the Puritan censor, then awaiting his sentence in prison, strove to outdo its predecessors in the variety of its anti-masques and the oddity of its characters. Of his later semi-dramatic pieces, *Cupid and Death* aimed at little beyond the gracefulness of a private entertainment; *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses* (ending with the fine "The glories of our blood and state"), like the companion *Honorio and Mammon*, is of hardly more substantial texture than the interludes of our old drama.

The influences of the age in which he was bred, and which furnished to him the vital experience essential to a national dramatist, were by no means confined to purely literary sympathies or professional traditions. There is no reason for supposing him to have been of gentle birth, and his strenuous insistence upon class ideals is not in itself decisive in favour of such an assumption. But the Oxford College of which he was for a time a member (St John's), had long been under the marked influence of the Court; and its connexion with the great London School whence Shirley proceeded to it (Merchant Taylors') must have heightened the interest of its *alumni* in the controversies of their times, in which religion and politics were closely intertwined. Shirley, accordingly, carries the uncompromising loyalty of our Jacobean and Caroline dramatists to the highest pitch of abstract enthusiasm ever reached by them. Like other members of St John's College, the Spanish inclinations of whose members are a wellknown fact, he became (though not during his residence there) a convert to the Church of Rome. He nowhere puts himself forward as a combative Papist; but he loses no opportunity of ex-

hibiting his attachment to the doctrines and practices of the creed professed by him (see *The Wedding*; *The Grateful Servant*; *Love in a Maze*; with, perhaps, *The Sisters*), and ridicules the popular prejudice against Rome alongside of that against Spain (see *The Bird in a Cage*). He took a lively rather than a deep interest in the course of affairs abroad (see *The Witty Fair One*; *The Ball*; *The Opportunity*; and, above all, *The Example*). But, unlike Massinger, with whom he is here and there in literary contact, he seems, before the outbreak of the troubles, to have concerned himself with domestic controversy only when it bore upon the relations between the Court and the art with which he was himself identified (see *The Bird in a Cage*). From first to last, he was an enthusiastic adherent of both King and Queen (see especially *The Lady of Pleasure*); although their goodwill towards him is not known to have found expression in material favours.

Under these influences, Shirley pursued the singularly even and self-consistent tenor of his career as a productive dramatist. He was gifted with a genuinely poetic temperament, but one that was assimilative and fanciful rather than passionate and profound; and possessed a pleasant wit, together with a humorous perception limited by his own range of experience and observation. The prevailing tone of his mind was serious, and inclined him to prefer forms of composition whose dignity demands a greater expenditure of care. While, accordingly, the dramatic species to which the large majority of his plays belong was mixed to such a degree as to leave very little essential difference between his tragedies and most of his comedies respectively,



the tragic element usually preponderates even in plays which cannot be technically classed as tragedies. For the most part, these plays fairly correspond to the Attic, which was also the Italian and early Elizabethan, notion of a tragicomedy, as resembling tragedies in their outward form and in their principal interest, but containing some comic characters and scenes, and arriving at a "happy" conclusion. Shirley would appear to have naturally fallen into a preference for this variety of romantic comedy, under the influence of Fletcher and other native, as well as of Spanish, models. In his earliest comedy (*Love Tricks*), which has many marks of youth as well as of scholastic surroundings, and was probably written before he settled in London, he was manifestly copying the Jonsonian comedy of manners, and the *School of Complement*, which gives its sub-title to the play, is an elaborate humorous device quite after the master's fashion. In his second (*The Brothers*), although he is already trying his hand upon a Spanish plot, and although in some passages the style is already highly ornamented, he had not as yet surely found his proper vein; and in the third (*The Witty Fair One*), of which the action sinks into wild farce, he seems to be on his way back to the extravagance of the native school. But in the far more refined and, in parts, beautiful play of *The Wedding*; in the nobly conceived and finely executed *Grateful Servant*; in those portions at least of *The Changes* which treat a pathetic theme resembling that of its predecessor; and in the bright extravaganza of *The Bird in a Cage*, we have successive examples of the species in which their author excelled. *Hyde Park*, in some measure, but far more notably *The Ball*, ex-

hibits a reaction towards the Jonsonian comedy of manners; and *The Gamester*, too, though its chief interest lies elsewhere, has a realistic background of modern English life. But, with the sole unpleasing exception of *The Humorous Courtier*, the remaining comedies of Shirley—*The Young Admiral*, *The Example*, *The Opportunity*, *The Lady of Pleasure*, *The Royal Master* and *The Constant Maid*—are alike typical of the species of comedy which was most congenial to him, and on his contributions to which, together with his fewer tragedies, his distinctive fame as a standard English dramatist may be said to rest. To his comedies of this class, therefore, of which the one here reprinted furnishes a notable example, the following observations in especial, though not exclusively, apply.

Shirley has, probably, been overpraised for the originality of his plots. To speak of his comedies only, and even to waive the question as to whether the resemblances between the main plots of *The Grateful Servant* and *Twelfth Night* are accidental—he expressly claims a Spanish origin for the story of *The Brothers*; the learning of Mr Fitzmaurice-Kelly has traced the plot of *The Young Admiral* to Lope de Vega's *Don Lope de Cardona*, and that of *The Opportunity* to Tirso de Molina's *El Castigo del Pensèque*; and the most attractive part of the action of *The Royal Master* was, as will be seen, borrowed from Boccaccio. On the other hand, Shirley was incontestably very skilful in the disposition of the materials used by him in the construction of his comedies, and especially in his subordination of the inferior (generally the comic) to the principal interest of the piece. Hence, it is rarely difficult to follow without

any strain the course of the action in his plays, though it is invariably made up of at least two, and sometimes, as in *Hyde Park*, and *The Gamester*, of as many as three, plots. Ingenious in arrangement and manipulation, he is not particularly careful to avoid self-repetition in the choice of situations and *motifs*. Thus, the problem of finding oneself in love with two ladies at once meets us both in *The Changes* and in *The Ball*; and Shirley's favourite device of a moral *qui pro quo* as well as a merely external "shift" (to borrow the Nurse's term in *The Constant Maid*), is illustrated by the chaste Penelope who assumes the part of a wanton lady's maid (*The Witty Fair One*), as well as by the true wife who enacts a *succuba* (*The Grateful Servant*)—in each case *pour le bon motif*. In *The Opportunity* there is a double *qui pro quo*; while in *The Young Admiral* the familiar substitution scheme, which in its crude form is intolerable even in Shakespeare, is, for once, very charmingly as well as effectively varied.

Shirley's favourite characters are similarly apt to reappear; and here it would be of interest to speculate on the correspondence or divergence between two artistic ideals and the actual types which came under his ken at the Court of Charles and Henrietta Maria, or in its vicinity. He cherished a strong admiration for Strafford, and we know that, when the troubles began, they brought out many other examples of the heroism of unselfish loyalty. Shirley may have divined some of these, as we guess them *ex post facto* even from the courtly canvases of Van Dyck. To Shirley, the high-minded nobleman or gentleman who sacrifices everything to his duty towards his King was the representative



of the truest latter-day chivalry; although the exaggerated form in which the sentiment clothes itself in such plays as *The Grateful Servant* and *The Young Admiral* may be in part due to Spanish influence, and to the un-English sentiment of the equality, or equal insignificance, of all "under the King." But he had other and wider conceptions of true nobility, than are implied either in the Spanish perversion of the principle of loyalty, or in the artificial elaboration of the *punto d'onor*. Passages defining or illustrating Shirley's idea of the true nobleman or gentleman (in the Chaucerian sense of the term) occur in several of his comedies (*Hyde Park*, *The Ball*, *The Example*); in one of them a homily on this text brings a would-be sinner to his right mind; in another the noble spirit reveals itself, as in an earlier Lord Kew, beneath the outward habits of the rake. Nor is Shirley afraid of avowing his belief that "honour of blood" is incomplete "without the ornament of knowledge" (*The Lady of Pleasure*). He has an equally lofty conception of "the true lady," whose "beauty spreads over the soul" (*ib.*); but his favourite female type, which he repeatedly introduces, is what must at least be conceded to be a peculiar variety, more familiar to a later age. It may be described as the girl or woman of high spirit, ready to go great lengths in speech and conduct to serve the purpose she has in view, or to give vent to the vitality that is in her; but who remains pure and virtuous. Such are, each in her own way, Penelope in *The Witty Fair One*, Julietta in *Hyde Park*, Lucina in *The Ball*, Jacinta in *The Example*, Celestina in *The Lady of Pleasure*, and (for she may be included), Mrs Carol in *Hyde Park*, a kind of Beatrix,

tamed at last. All these are high comedy figures; and for such Shirley has an unmistakable predilection. Among more conventional types familiar to his comedies may be mentioned his pages, the agile ministers of intrigue or its semblance (see *The Gamester*; *The Young Admiral*; *The Example*); and, perhaps, as remote from one another though probably alike wellknown to him by experience, the university bumpkin (see *The Lady of Pleasure*; *The Sisters*) and the compliment-maker, town conversationalist and poetaster (see *Love Tricks*; *The Humorous Courtier*; *The Changes*).

Thus, Shirley's comedies show him to have been possessed of more than common instinctive skill, reinforced by a quick use of his exceptional intimacy with the most productive as well as powerful of contemporary dramatic literatures; while he contributed, although in no very signal degree, to the achievements of the English comic drama on its strongest side—characterisation. Yet, had he been distinguished by no other qualities, and had he accomplished no other results than these, they would not, so far at least as the evidence of his comedies goes, have entitled him to be ranked among our great dramatic poets of the earlier half of the 17th century. His place among his peers he occupies mainly by virtue of a poetic style which by its elevation, wealth, and beauty marks him as partner in an inheritance that has fructified in his hands. He was a master in the poetic use of metaphor; and it has been truly said that he was one of those post-Elizabethans—Fletcher being another—to whom the best of the impulse towards poetic imagery noticeable in our drama was communi-

cated after Shakespeare<sup>1</sup>. Yet, figurative, and original in the choice of its figures, as his diction is, it only exceptionally strains after that kind of effort which we term a conceit; and, though he was their contemporary, his poetic style as a rule by no means resembles that of Donne or of other early representatives of the Fantastic School<sup>2</sup>. While his phraseology is often marked by pregnancy and point, yet sheer wit—wit for wit's sake—like that either of Lyly or of Congreve, had no attractions for a writer of his intellectual temperament. As his style was his own, so it had manifestly formed itself without difficulty, and, after being formed, underwent no important modifications during the progress of a long and assiduous literary career. He naturally shrank from any attempt to accentuate its individuality by mannerisms, and showed no anxiety either to improve upon golden traditions, or to force a new silvern departure. Thus, ease came to him as a matter of course, and to it were speedily added grace and charm. Moreover, the chosen sphere of his poetic fancy was a world of sun and sweetness. Many other poets—and many English poets among them—have been at home with the flowers of the field and the birds of the greenwood; but none has loved them better than this playwright of the town; and, though other phenomena of the natural world (often no doubt conventional) contribute to suggest the tropes with which he loves to ornament his diction, he derives most of these, and of his descriptive

<sup>1</sup> F. I. Carpenter, *Metaphor and Simile in the Minor Elizabethan Drama*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Angelina's ridicule of the Scholar's erotic style in *The Sisters*; and cf. Confident Rapture's speeches in *The Example*.



touches in general, from his favourite trees and flowers and birds. The shadow of the forest, the colour and perfume of rose, marigold and woodbine, the golden sheen of the cornfield, the note of the nightingale and the flight of the birds by land and sea, seem to haunt his pages; and even the stillness of the night presents itself to him as the season when there is

No whispering but of leaves, on which the breath  
Of heaven plays music to the birds that slumber.

In versification as in diction, no differences of much significance are noticeable between Shirley's earlier and later plays; while in this respect, too, he displays few of those individually distinctive features upon which comparative criticism is entitled to lay stress. He makes one of his characters (in *The Wedding*) declare a preference for "poetical prose" to verse—but it is rimed verse that is here in question; and there can be no doubt but that rhythmical speech was the form of composition which best commended itself to him. As might be expected from the refined catholicity of his taste, together with his natural predilection for the nearest and fullest, as well as most congenial, example before him, his versification shows a general, but by no means close, resemblance to Fletcher's. It should, perhaps, be added, that Shirley's blank verse in his earlier plays exhibits a tendency to an excessive use of so-called "weak endings" (in which the redundant syllable consists of an auxiliary verb, pronoun or the like), and that this transnormal, and by no means effective, habit or trick occasionally reappears in his later work. In general, he is fond of metrical license, whether of earlier or later usage, and is specially addicted to sounding a foot

between mute and liquid consonants (*rememb-e-ranced*). But the extremely corrupt condition of their text makes caution very necessary in discussing the metrification of Shirley's plays.

The comedy of *The Royal Master* here reprinted, although one of the poet's later works, belongs to a time when he was still in full productivity as a dramatist, and when the presentiment of coming public and personal troubles had not yet arrested the free flow of his fancy. It is thoroughly typical of the dramatic form most congenial to him, and in which he chiefly excelled; and in the conception and treatment of its subject, as well as in manner and style, illustrates not a few of the features adverted to above as marking the romantic comedies of this author. The argument is made up of two stories; but so ingeniously and with such seeming ease are they interwoven with one another, that, to all intents and purposes, they form a single plot. Of these stories, the one has a wholly serious interest, rendered intense by the succession of rapid turns in its progress; the other hovers between the pathetic and the humorous, and intermixed with it are, for the sake of usage and the groundlings, a few rather thinly comic scenes. The principal story, of unknown derivation, is concerned with one of those Court intrigues which furnished so many of their dramatic themes to Shirley, Fletcher, Massinger, Webster and other dramatists of their age, and which savour of Italian "Tyranny" in the later half of the 15th and earlier half of the 16th century, although the historical original of the "King of Naples," at whose Court the scene of this comedy is laid, lived at least two centuries earlier. The King, who is a

widower, has a sister, Theodosia; and for her hand his brother-in-law, the Duke of Florence, is a suitor. Both are favourably inclined towards his suit, but it is opposed with deadly determination by the King's favourite, Montalto, whose ambition aspires to the hand of the Princess for himself. First, he contrives to attract the Duke's fancy to the youthful Domitilla, whom the King had intended to wed the favourite himself. Then, he poisons the Duke's mind against Theodosia, pretending to him that she is contracted to another, and afterwards professing that it is himself with whom she has exchanged vows. But Montalto's wiles are watched by Riviero, a statesman whom he had in former days ousted from the King's favour and, as it was believed, done to death, but who has now returned in disguise as the Duke's secretary. To him, Montalto, in order further to work upon the Duke, asserts the frailty of Theodosia, while seeking to excite her jealousy against the Duke as Domitilla's lover. But Domitilla convinces Theodosia of its causelessness, and, after the Duke has accused Theodosia before the King, she nobly vindicates herself to her royal brother from the shameful charge against her. Montalto is plotting the murder of the Duke's secretary, who alone can hold him responsible for the accusation, and he had drawn his dagger behind the back of the Duke himself, when a letter from Riviero to the King virtually determines his doom. With much *finesse*, the King proposes to him, by way of an extreme favour, to order his temporary arrest, so as to discover his real friends and enemies. Montalto has to walk into the snare with open eyes; and, when the test has been applied, he knows, after a



moment of delusion, that he is undone. Theodosia and the Duke have found one another; and Montalto's life would pay for his treason, but that it is spared, in consideration of Riviero's return.

With this well devised and effectively sustained story of intrigue and counterplot is intertwined the simple romantic tale of the gentle Domitilla's love for the good King. This love springs from the maiden meditation of a guileless heart; though a mere self-delusion, its presentment is at once pleasing and pathetic; and, even when it finds itself doomed to disappointment, it leaves no bitterness behind it. With much tact a natural and satisfactory solution is prepared from the first in the attachment to Domitilla of the lost Riviero's son Octavio, a young courtier whose brightness and buoyancy of spirit are akin to Domitilla's own, and who chivalrously comes forward on her behalf, when the King, by testing her virtue, applies a painful remedy to her hopeless passion. The coarseness of this last passage—a coarseness which the theatrical adaptation of romance rarely succeeds in altogether avoiding, even in times more refined than Shirley's—mars the general effect of the entire episode, the main part of which is distinguished by a kindly humour and even by a certain tenderness of touch.

The story of Domitilla and her infatuation is taken from the *Decamerone*, where it forms the seventh *novella* of the tenth day, consecrate to examples of that high-mindedness or “magnificence” of spirit which had so peculiarly strong an attraction for our English poet. The incident is there connected with an historical personage—the Peter of Aragon who was the first King of his time that held sway in Sicily (from the “Vespers”

of 1282 to his death in 1285), and whose Queen was Constance, the daughter of King Manfred. The description, which occurs in the course of Boccaccio's narrative, of Mico of Siena as an excellent *dicitore in rima* of his age, is elsewhere cited as sufficient historical evidence of that personage's literary distinction. The *Decamerone* relates, with its usual graphic simplicity, how Lisa the daughter of Bernardo, a well-to-do Florentine physician settled in Palermo, fell in love with the good King Peter, whom from the window of her father's house she had beheld among his barons on the occasion of a high festival. She never told her love, but, concealing it, sickened till she seemed near death. It was then that she bethought herself of revealing her irresistible passion to the King before she died; and this desire she with her father's consent entrusted to the accomplished singer and musician Minuccio, whom the King was in the habit of frequently admitting to his presence. Minuccio commissioned the celebrated poet Mico of Siena to write a *canzonetta* expressive of Lisa's love, of her expectancy of death, and of her craving for a sign of recognition before she should pass away. This Minuccio found an opportunity of singing in the presence of the King, who after hearing the song and learning its significance, sent word to the maiden by Minuccio that he would visit her at vesper-time in her father's house. Here, the generous kindness of his bearing and his words overcame her anguish, and her desire for death. When he came again, accompanied by his gracious Queen, she willingly agreed, in obedience to his behest, to promise her hand to a suitor of his choice—a gentleman whom he endowed

with an estate. At the same time, the King declared that henceforth he would be Lisa's knight, and wear her colours in the fray, and this promise, in the presence of the Queen, he sealed with a single kiss.

This pretty and pathetic story was put into English verse by George Eliot in her poem *How Lisa loved the King* (printed in *The Legend of Jubal, and other Poems*, 1874). Neither the simple theme, nor the light but close-fitting form, suitable rather to the pen of a Leigh Hunt, fitted the great English writer's at once profound and expansive genius; but she treated it with admirable taste and self-restraint, and abstained from any material alteration of the original, gracefully avowed at the close of her poem. Was she aware that, many years before, Alfred de Musset had made the same story the subject of one of those dramatic poems in prose, in which, with rare subtlety, he blended the *naïveté* of an earlier age of art with the ironical melancholy of his own poetic genius? *Carmosine* (apparently not printed till 1857, the year of its author's death) is not one of the best known, but far from one of the least charming, of these inimitable water-colours. The changes there introduced leave the story unaltered in substance; but they are signally effective both in accentuating its emotional effects and in softening its primitive asperities; in short, they attest the heightened feeling of the romantic poet and the assured tact of the modern dramatist. The suitor, Perdicone, who proves fortunate in the end, is broken up into two personages, the fatuous courtier Ser Vespasiano and the faithful Perillo; the devoted father, Bernardo, is provided with a foolish spouse, Dame Paque; Minuccio, the agent of the *dénouement*,



is invested with the fantastic volubility as well as the instinctive insight of the latter-day troubadour; and, above all, Carmosine's broken heart is healed by the womanly sympathy of the high-minded Queen, before the cure is completed by the plain-spoken chivalry of the King in person.

Of the low comedy with which Shirley has here, to a rather slighter extent than is usual with him, diversified the unfolding of his double action, Domitilla's secretary Bombo has almost singly (according to the French expression) to "defray the cost." In him, the pedant and the booby are humorously mixed, and he makes some honest mirth, though his sallies cannot exactly be described as irresistible. Such as he is, Bombo furnishes a fair, but certainly not more than fair, sample of Shirley's stage fun.

Apart from this rather conventional buffoonery, the characterisation in *The Royal Master* is worthy of admiration both for its variety and its discrimination. The *bonhomie* which tempers the dignity of the King, and over which no very dark shadow is cast by his sorrows as a widower, mentioned by him at the beginning and at the end of the play, was probably suggested by the kindly monarch of Boccaccio's *novella*; but a highbred air and a loftiness of soul, in face of which the wiles of cunning collapse, distinguish both him and his royal sister, while even her volatile suitor the Duke of Florence is never hurried away into ignobility. Montalto, the chief personage of the action, is drawn with a sure hand and in telling lines—a "Machiavel" of a subtle and secret sort, versatile in his devices and swift in their execution, while a suitable foil is supplied by

the unquestioning servility of his triplet of courtier-creatures. Andrugio, whom at the opening of the play Montalto derides as a dull cipher, proves one of the agents of his ruin. The two most attractive characters of the play, Domitilla and her youthful admirer, Riviero's son Octavio, are such by their real freshness and naturalness; but, in the case of each, the deeper movements of a loyal and fearless spirit soon reveal themselves under a surface rippled by light-hearted gaiety.

*The Royal Master* is, even for one of Shirley's romantic comedies, full of passages attesting his love of the beauties of nature, and his practice of ornamenting his poetic diction with metaphors derived from natural objects, or at least from the conventional conception of them. The garden-scene of the second act, appropriately enough, contains a powerful as well as picturesque passage symbolising the fate of Theodosia in the ruin spread by a storm over a summer-day; and in the last three acts is to be found a notable variety of metaphors of the same description, among which may be signalised the striking picture of the comet (IV, i), and that of the fallen forest oak, "the great man's emblem" (v, ii). The exposure to suspicion of Theodosia's fair name reminds her brother of lovely flowers withered (IV, i); and Montalto's sickening uncertainty in the crisis of his fate is ironically compared by his royal master to the firmness of the rock that defies the insolence of the waves (v, ii). Nor can such passages as these be said to come as a surprise; for in none of his romantic comedies has Shirley more happily sustained the flow of his diction and the harmony of his verse.

## 14. THE PARNASSUS PLAYS<sup>1</sup>

(*The Owens College Magazine*, July, 1887.)

YOU are aware how for a long time our English drama resembled a bud full of promise on a green and sap-fed stalk, almost visibly longing to burst into bloom. It was in the academical hothouse that this bud first became a flower. Our first English comedy was virtually, our second actually, a university play; and what was *Gorboduc*, our first English tragedy, but another academical effort, written like the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Thackeray's *Pall Mall Gazette*, if you please), by gentlemen for gentlemen—in other words, presented to the Queen and her Court by members of one of those learned Societies where the wits of Cam and Isis further polished their glittering foils for yet keener fencing-bouts?

But, even confining ourselves to the university drama in the proper sense of the term, we should have had a full and an interesting field to survey. We might have begun with the controversial academical drama of the Reformation age, and have dwelt on the performance at Cambridge of that curious play, called by Professor Herford the Protestant version of the legend of Antichrist—which performance proved to the intellectual director of Henry VIII's Conservative counsels that it is easier to pull the wires of academical activity than to make them cease from troubling. We might,

<sup>1</sup> *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* and *The Two Parts of the Return from Parnassus*. Ed. from MSS. by W. D. Macray. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1886.



with the help of the Calendars of State Papers and of other authorities, have traced the results of the encouragement long and consistently given to these academical representations, on the summit of which flattery could so easily perch, by the steady and single-minded patronage of Queen Elizabeth. And we might have carried on our narrative, till it culminated in an account of the most famous of all English academical performances, that of Ruggle's *Ignoramus*, whose exquisite dog-Latin, unsurpassed even in the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, so much delighted King James when he heard it in the hall of Clare, that he, as it were, cried *encore*—for he came to hear it again two months afterwards. At that time, what with the exuberant loyalty of the Universities, and what with the taste for extravagance in dress and decoration which characterised the age, the rage for these performances was greater than ever at Oxford and Cambridge; and, as is usual where amateurs take to acting, the externals of the business absorbed a considerable share of their attention—at least I find Sir Dudley Carleton writing home from the Hague concerning an adaptation from Seneca, which he had seen performed at the University of Leyden, that, as for the actors (to give them their due), if their outsides for their dressing apparel had been answerable to their pronounciation and acting, *they might compare with our Universities*. But, as is often the case, no sooner has a movement reached its height and become a passion and a fashion, than it already betrays signs of the decline which must inevitably follow. The Academical Drama, being after all nothing more than an amusement, was doomed to be carried to excess

wherever it was cultivated; no rules or laws such as are imposed upon the popular Drama by its very conditions, helped to preserve the paler and feebler academical species from the dangers of extravagance, artificiality, and license. At Cambridge, in particular, where the supposed intellectual flower as well as the social cream of the University (including sundry future bishops and deans), was pressed into the service of the King's volunteer players, the academic Muse could not tickle the palate of King and Court without some of the effrontery and licentiousness which was part of the *bon ton*; and thus she could not please in that quarter without elsewhere becoming a stone of offence.

But my purpose to-night is not to attempt any such general sketch; still less, after sketching the rise and growth, to moralise upon the decline and fall, of that Academic Drama upon which, as upon the Drama in general, and rather more effectively than upon any other branch of it, the Puritan Revolution turned lock and key. I rather wish to choose from out of the very variegated group of plays to which I have referred a single (or rather a double) sample, belonging neither to the earliest nor to the latest among the productions forming part of it, but taken almost literally from the heart and middle of the series. And there seems a two-fold reason why it may be worth while for us to dwell a little upon the twin-plays in question. In the first place, those two of the three academical dramas making up the *Parnassus* series, to which I desire to-night to direct your attention, are to all intents and purposes quite recent discoveries, and will therefore in all probability be new to many of my audience. The Owens

College Shakespeare Society may possibly have already (incidentally, if not of set purpose) discussed and appreciated this remarkable addition to the extant remains of Elizabethan literature; yet some of my hearers to-night may be unacquainted with the details of the discovery. In any case, you have all heard of Thomas Hearne, the eminent Oxford antiquary and collector, who in the early days of the 18th century—the good old Jacobite times—held and resigned, as incompatible with his political opinions, the posts of Architypographer and Esquire Bedell, and of Second Librarian in the Bodleian. Hearne, who was a non-juror and a person of irritable humour, lived well into the reign of George II, and, as everyone knows, collected a vast number of heterogeneous MSS, which he bound together as they came into his hands, and which, together with his MS diary, contained in a series of 150 paper books, he left to a friend, who sold them to a friend of his own, who in turn bequeathed them to the Bodleian Library. In one of the volumes of MSS, forming part of the collection, called the Rawlinson (from the name of its donor), it occurred to Mr W. D. Macray, only the other day, to *discover* the first two plays of the *Parnassus* series, as I may take leave to call it. Hereupon, it very naturally further occurred to him to publish the two plays, in company with the third and most elaborate play of the series, which was already well known to fame, and which had only quite recently been republished by Professor Edward Arber, in his *English Scholar's Library*, with a very useful bibliographical apparatus. I wish it had finally occurred to Mr Macray to *edit* the two plays in a way worthy of his own interest in the subject, instead



of contenting himself with a glossary and a few slight notes.

My second and chief reason for choosing these plays as the subject of this brief lecture is that, more distinctly than any other Elizabethan works with which I am acquainted, they seem to bring home to us the characteristic features of a particular province in a particular kingdom for which we all have, if not an instinctive sympathy, at least what may be called a sneaking kindness. The name of that kingdom is Bohemia, and the province of it into which, so far as the Elizabethan age is concerned, these plays enable us to take a glimpse is its academical province, which, amidst all its lawlessness, prides itself upon having immunities and privileges—and penalties, too—peculiar to itself. Do not be afraid if I propose to lift a curtain of Elizabethan Bohemia. The student of literature, like the student of science, should not be squeamish; but there is no reason why he should seek opportunities too frequent or too open for thrusting his oil-lamp into the nakednesses and wretchednesses of the lives of those who, whether they were great or whether they were small, are now dead. We wish neither to conceal nor to ignore, on the other hand we do not wish to thrust forward as on the movable bier of the Attic stage, the figure of Christopher Marlowe, stained with wine and blood, and struck down in the midst of a tavern brawl,—or that of Robert Greene, who, after giving Marlowe and his fellows so much excellent advice, lingered out under the cobbler's roof his own last illness, brought on by a surfeit of Rhenish and red herrings. The scenes on which I ask you to cast a glance to-night are tamer, and, except in an occasional detail

or so, more decorous. But, for all that, they have about them the Bohemian touch, the Bohemian savour. For what, to put it in the form of an examination question, are the distinctive characteristics of Bohemia? The world at large is well aware of the contrast, often comical often cruel, and sometimes not the less cruel because it is comical, between ambition and achievement, between hope and fulfilment, between a dream which comes to us many a night and an awakening which punctually happens, or which happens even when it does not happen punctually, *every* morning. The world at large is familiar with the experience that the impotent aspire as well as the strong, that the buoyancy of self-deception is often difficult to distinguish from the self-deception of genius, but that Fortune, she who in Chaucer's words "turneth as a balle," judges according to her own standard or according to her own caprice, and awards the meed of success now to the deserving, now to the minion of her own arbitrary favours. But in Bohemia, inasmuch as the successful almost always take the very next train which leads them away from

the city,

The beautiful city of Prague,

it is naturally enough the darker side of the contrast, the more unpleasant half of the experience, which impress themselves more especially upon the resident population, to whom the situation presents itself after the fashion in which it is summed up by one of the passages in the second of the plays I propose to describe to you:

"I had rather," he says, but perhaps he does not mean it—  
 "I had rather have store in my purse and less in my heade!

I see wit is but a phantasme and an idea, a quareling shadowe that will seldome dwell in the same roome with a full purse, but commonly is the idle folower of a forlorn creature. Nay, it is a devill, that will never leave a man till it hath brought him to beggerie; a malicious spirit, that delights in a close libell or an open satyre. Besides, it is an unfortunate thinge; I have observed that that heade where it dwelleth hath seldom a good hatt, or the back it belongs unto a good sute of apparell."

As the author of these strictures implies, Bohemians are naturally much given to satire; for they live very much with their neighbours, at times even *on* their neighbours; and the materials for sarcastic comment, published in a sense although not printed, are as easily found in college chambers as in St Paul's Walk and in other places where men congregate in the great metropolitan world. Thus it comes to pass that, though moving within what to the outside world seems a narrow circle, the ambition of academical life, like the range of an ancient temple, soars infinitely *high* to the heavens; and that failure is not more ridiculous, more bitter, more tragic, when half-compelled by the lips of the author or artist who hoped to conquer the world, than when blurted out by the disappointed pilgrim who has all in vain journeyed to Parnassus Hill and back again.

But let us keep our moral to the last, when there may be no time left for it and when perhaps it may in any case seem superfluous. My wish is to offer some account of the two newly discovered plays only, leaving those of my hearers who are not already acquainted with the third play to read it for themselves. It is very easily accessible, and has moreover already been fully described by previous writers, by Mr Mullinger in his standard *History of the University of Cambridge*, among the number.



Moreover, as will be obvious on a quite perfunctory comparison, the third play merely repeats with extensions and additions, and with a special development implied by its sub-title *The Scourge of Simony*, the argument of the second play, which like it is called *The Return from Parnassus*. The most interesting passage of the third play is, as many of you are aware, that in the second scene of the first act, where the academical critics Ingenioso and Judicio comment on the list of poets given in the preface to John Bodenham's *Belvedere, or The Garden of the Muses*, published in the year 1600. This list is really a twofold one, consisting in the first place of such right honourable and noble persons as Thomas Earl of Surrey, Mary Countess of Pembroke ("Sidney's sister"), Sir Philip Sidney himself, the Earl of Oxford, Sir Walter Raleigh, and others. But on these great personages the characters in the play, as Professor Arber has pointed out, prudently refrain from offering their censures; like the exclusive gentleman who expected arrangements to be made in the next world which would prevent one from meeting there the sort of people one does not care to meet, these critics evidently recognised even on Helicon the distinction between persons in, and persons out of, society. Their criticisms on the latter, among whom are included Spenser, Marlowe, and Shakespeare, are to be found in every handbook<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> I may note by the way, as not mentioned in the books, that Cervantes' *Voyage to Parnassus* (which contains a review of contemporary poets) was not published till 1675. In a letter of 1613 I find mention of Trajano Boccalini's *Ragguagli di Parnasso* (Advices from Parnassus) with a second part of *La Segretaria* (female secretary) *d' Apollo*.

This third play, as Professor Arber has established, was produced at Christmas-tide 1601-2 in St John's College, Cambridge. A new reading in the Prologue shows that the first play called *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* was brought out "some four years" previously; but there are clear indications<sup>1</sup> that it could not have been written before 1598; so that Christmas 1598-9 must have been the date of its production. The second play, or the *First Return from Parnassus*, which, like its successor, calls itself a Christmas toy, was, accordingly, produced at one of the two intervening Christmas seasons, and it was manifestly the great success of the earlier pieces, probably more especially of the second among them, that led to the elaboration of the third. "The *Pilgrimage to Pernassus*," says Momus, in the Prologue to the *Second Return*, "and the returne from *Pernassus* have stood the honest stage-keepers in many a crownes expence for linckes and vizards<sup>2</sup>: purchased (many) a sophister a knock (with) a clubbe: hindred the buttlers box<sup>3</sup>, and emptied the college barrells; and now unlesse you know the subiect well you may returne home as wise as you came, for this last is the (last) part of the returne from *Parnassus*, that is the last time that the authors wit wil turne upon the toe in this vaine." The College where this trilogy was performed, within the limits of time

<sup>1</sup> Viz., the mention in the play of Kinsayder's *Satires*, Bastard's *Epigrams*, and Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, all published in 1598. See Professor Hales' article in the *Academy*, March 19, 1887.

<sup>2</sup> Masks, I suppose, for ladies to wear during the performance, and torches to light it up, or to light the spectators home after it was over.

<sup>3</sup> This is explained by Professor Hales: "greatly diminished the usual Christmas gambling." The emptying of the College barrels explains itself.

mentioned, was St John's College, Cambridge, "that most famous and fortunate Nurse of all learning," to quote Thomas Nashe as cited by Professor Arber,

that at that time was as an Universitie within it selfe; shining so far above all other Houses, Halls, and Hospitals whatsoever, that no Colledge in the Towne was able to compare with the tythe of her students; having (as I have hearde grave men of credite report) more candles light<sup>1</sup> in it, euerie Winter Morning before foure of the clocke, than the foure of clocke bell gaue stroakes; till She (I saie) as a pittying Mother, put too her helping hande, and sent from her fruitfull wombe, sufficient schollers, both to support her owne weale, as also to supplie all other inferior foundations, defects, and namelie that royall erection of *Trinitie Colledge*, which the Universitie Orator, in an Epistle to the Duke of *Somerset*, aptlie termed *Colonia diducta*, from the Suburbes of *Saint Johns*.

All this is not mere brag or, shall I say, spread-*Eagleism*; but it considerably overshoots the mark. Still though, as a glance at Mr Wordsworth's figures<sup>2</sup> will show, Trinity towards the close of the 16th century already largely surpassed St John's in numbers, and, though during the mastership of Richard Clayton (1595-1612) the latter college was declining in learning as well as in numbers<sup>3</sup>, it remained as it has since<sup>4</sup> remained from the latter point of view, the second college in the University; at this very time was built its Second Court, which Mr Ruskin is stated to consider the noblest specimen of college architecture in England; in accordance with Nashe's vaunt, a number of its sons were ruling as

<sup>1</sup> I.e. lit.

<sup>2</sup> Chr. Wordsworth, *Social Life at the English Universities in the Eighteenth Century* (1874), pp. 641-3.

<sup>3</sup> Mullinger, vol. II, p. 470.

<sup>4</sup> [1887.]



Masters in other Colleges; and its name was honoured out in the world, where, to mention only the most prominent examples, both the Cecils, father and son, were numbered among its *alumni*.

So much as to time and place of the performance of our Parnassus plays. Of their author, we know nothing, but for the scant information which he incidentally imparts concerning himself in the course of the plays. Hearne's MS bears on the outside leaf the name "Edmunde Rishton, Lancastrensis"; but this is, probably, the name of the owner, not the author; and unfortunately, while the College registers at St John's do not reach back beyond the year 1634, Mr John Eglington Bailey, who knows every Lancashire family of mark, whether before or after that date, cannot identify Master Edmund Rishton by his short description of himself. There are other indications connecting the MS with the North of England; and this agrees with an autobiographical passage in the Prologue to the second play, from which we may gather that the author was from Cheshire. In this Prologue he, whether ironically or not, informs the spectators that, though the previous play (*The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*) may have brought him applause, it certainly brought him no good fortune.

Surelie it made our poete a staide man,  
Kepte his proude necke from baser lambskins weare,  
Had like to have made him senior sophister.  
He was faine to take his course by Germanie  
Ere he could gett a silie poore degree.  
Hee never since durst name a peece of cheese,  
Though Chesshire seems to priviledge his name.  
His looke was never sanguine since that daye;  
Nere since he laughte to see a mimick playe.

In other words, the production of his play, or the popularity which it achieved, made the author sober-minded instead of puffed-up; it interfered in one way or another with his taking his B.A. degree in the ordinary way, and had very nearly made him a third year's man *in perpetuum*<sup>1</sup>. Perhaps, the authorities of his College would not give him the necessary *testamur* or certificate of good conduct; and he therefore resorted to Germany, at some of whose many Universities there was, *in Elizabeth's days*, a good chance of obtaining a degree without too many questions being asked. But he looks back with the reverse of pride upon the days of his cheese-chase<sup>2</sup>, though a Cheshire man. In short, the play, which was good sport to so many, had proved something like ruin to the author.

It is time, however, to turn from that author and such notice of himself as he vouchsafes, to his works themselves.

The first of these plays, the *Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, announces itself in the Prologue as composed in three days, and in its concluding lines takes no greater credit to itself than is the due of an "extemporall show." And its action is in truth slight enough, recalling in its general course many a time-honoured allegorical fancy

<sup>1</sup> [This (Professor Hales's) seemed the best explanation, when this paper was written.]

<sup>2</sup> Mr Hales is informed by Dr Schoell that *Käsebettler* or *Käsejäger* was a nickname for the *scholastici vagantes*—unsettled students of the period. I have in vain sought for an illustration of this in Zarncke. [Nor was it necessary to do so, if Sir I. Gollancz's identification of the author with a wellknown student of Caius College—called *Käs* 'College' by a German traveller of the seventeenth century—is accepted.]

illustrating the road to learning. At the outset, we find the aged Consiliodorus bidding farewell to his son Philomusus and his nephew Studioso on their departure for the hill of Parnassus. The old man, who can well recall the intellectual delights as well as the dangers which lurk by the way of university life, is sending forth two hopeful youths to take their share of these things, which are better than wealth and place, and which ought to be prized for their own sake rather than for the sake of what they are quite likely not to bring with them. This is the keynote of the play, and a note that must have gone home to many an academical bosom:

Youe twoo are pilgrims to Parnassus' hill  
Where with sweet nectar you youre vaines may fill;  
Wheare you maye bath your drye and withered quills  
And teache them write some sweeter poetrie  
That may hereafter live a longer daye.  
There may you bath youre lipps in Hellicon  
And wash youre tounge in Aganippe's well,  
And teache them warble out some sweet sonnéte  
To ravish all the filde and neighbour-groves;  
That aged Collin, leaning on his staffe,  
Feedinge his milkie flocke upon the downs  
May wonder at your sweet melodious pips,  
And be attentive to your harmonie.  
There may youre templs be adornd with bays;  
There may you slumber in sweet extasies;  
There may you sit in softe greene lauriate shade,  
And heare the Muses warble at a laye  
And mountinge singe like larke in somer's daye.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I doe commende," he continues, after contrasting the joys awaiting them with the gross material qualifications of the ordinary man, the Philistine, in a word—



I doe commend your studious intent,  
 In that you make soe faire a pilgrimage.  
 If I were younge, who nowe am waxen oulde,  
 Whose yonts (joints?), you see, are dryde, benumd and coulde,  
 Though I foreknewe that gold was to the boore,  
 I'd be a scholar, though I live but poore.

But they must be wary pilgrims; and so, as Euphues advised Philautus, and Polonius advised Laertes, he gives them some good counsel on the way—not the less true and sound because it is counsel which many an honest and unworldly father has given to his son when setting forth for Parnassus hill, mounting the coach, or putting himself into the train which is for the first time to take him on that long journey with an uncertain ending—the journey to College. Of course, they are bidden not to consort on the way with graceless boys

That feede the taverne with their idle coyne,  
 Till their leane purses starve at last for foode.

They have reason enough for economy; but the student's bark will not carry him to Eldorado; passages for that region must be taken in a different kind of vessel.

Let schollers be as thriftie as they maye,  
 They will be poore ere their last dyinge daye;  
 Learning and povertie will ever kiss.  
 Each carter<sup>1</sup> caries fortune by his side,  
 But fortune will with schollers nere abide.

For all that, let them eschew all laziness, and scorn to live base inglorious days, and be "industrious pilgrims in the way." Let them avoid mere fribbles,

Those amorettos that doe spend their time  
 In comminge<sup>2</sup> of their smother-dangled heyre

<sup>1</sup> As to the "carter," vide *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., combing.

(‘smother-dangled’ is good—the time was not far distant when the cavaliers were to take pride in those love-locks which Prynne execrated); but let them not, on that account, as a matter of course, place confidence in every rugged brow and unshaven chin. Let them choose their society among those who are studious like themselves, and thus successfully accomplish the pilgrimage on which they are intent.

For happilie, with a swift swallowes wing,  
To Hellicon faire, that pure and happie spring!  
Returne triumphant with your laurell boughes,  
With Phœbus’ trees decke your deservinge brows.

So the farewell is said, and our young friends, Philomusus and Studioso, set forth on their pilgrimage—half fearful of the toil which awaits their feet, half hopeful of the future when those feet

Maie one day on a bedd of roses rest,  
Amidst Parnassus’ shadie laurell greene.

Needless to say, they have much to pass through before they can think of reaching that consummation. And the first country through which they journey is the land of Logic, an island which their old counsellor had told them they would find “full of craggie mountains and thornie vallies. There are twoo robbers in this cuntries called *genus* and *species*, that take captive everie true man’s invention that come by them.” (It pleases our author to reverse the usual order of things at Cambridge, according to which, after a year in Rhetoric, the student devoted himself for two years, i.e., during his Junior Soph. and Senior Soph. periods to Logic. In the Elizabethan age, Rhetoric had ousted from the first year

Mathematics, which were no longer a compulsory subject of study<sup>1</sup>.)

Hardly have they arrived in the land of Logic, when they find there a fellow-student, who offers them a great deal of bad advice. Madido, so called for his fond habit of *moistening* the operations of his wit, is a pilgrim who finds the way too hard, and the goal not worth the gaining, who has all the contempt of self-conscious literary talent for "those drie sober youths which can away to reede dull lives, fustie philosophers, dustie logicians." With a few scraps of Horace in his memory, and an active tapster at hand to cry, "*Anon, Anon, Sir!*" whenever that memory and his other faculties need refreshing, he is quite ready to become a writer as popular as Lodge the Euphuist, or any of the favourites of the book-buyers at St Paul's posts. "If, therefore, you be good felowes or wise felowes, travell no farther in the craggie way to the faimed Parnassus, return [w]home with mee, and wee will hire our studies in a taverne, and ere long not a poste in Paul's churchyarde but shall be alighted with our writings.

*Philom.* Nay then, I see thy wit in drinke is drounde,  
Wine doth the best part of thy soule confounde.

*Stud.* Let Parnass be a fond phantasticke place,  
Yet to Parnassus he would on my pace."

Madido plies them afresh with the contrast between the dulness of regular study—from *Propria quae maribus*

<sup>1</sup> With the usual bad luck of an editor, I had just passed through the press a revised edition of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, when I first became acquainted with the newly-discovered *Parnassus* plays, which would have helped to illustrate some of the curious allusions in the former to English University studies in the Elizabethan age.



and *As in praesenti*, through *Sintaxis*, “a land full of joyners,” and *Prosodia*, into “this ile *Dialectica* where I can see nothing but idees and phantasmes—and the delights of the wine-shop.” And though Studioso manfully pursues his journey, Philomusus is fain to linger a little behind with this jolly companion and his “wett phantasticke crewe”; nor is it till the next act that he overtakes his kinsman and fellow-traveller and tells him repentantly of his experiences. At first, it was pleasant enough to listen to the “pint pott” turned orator; but in the end shame overcame him, and he was offended and pained to see these “drowned souls” and their

idle merriment

Voyde of sounde solace and true hartes content,  
And now I love my pilgrimage the more,  
I love the Muses better than before.

Philomusus and his companion are now in the delightful land of *Rhetorique*, where the birds are singing in the morning air—

Harke, shrill don Cicero, how sweete he sings—

the nightingale of the grove; and listen to the chorus of other only less rare songsters, Muretus, Bembus, Sadolet, Haddon, Ascham<sup>1</sup>! The pilgrims are lost in the joy of imbibing this “sugred” harmony and gazing upon “the grassie diapred green earth,” when there enters to them another fellow-student engaged on the same journey.

*Stupido* (poor fellow) has been, as they say, “at it”

<sup>1</sup> For any of these famous names of the Renascence, see, if necessary, Hallam.

for many a long and weary year—ten years in all have passed since first he started on the pilgrimage on which the friends have now overtaken him. Poor Stupido has been a whole decade in finding out that there are some men for whom the heights of Parnassus are as unapproachable as is the peak of the Matterhorn to the fat and short of breath;—some who, in that struggle for a competence which we are most of us called upon to undergo, must obtain what they seek through some other avenue than that of a B.A. degree, with the examinations which, by a fatal order of things, precede it. So he has, at last, resolved to abhor what he cannot achieve, and to take the advice of his uncle, a goodman who “never wore capp nor surples in his life, nor anay such papistic ornament,” and who has recommended him to forswear the study of “these vaine arts of Rhétorique, Poetrie, and Philosophie; there is noe sounde edifying knowledge in them.” He has accordingly resolved to turn Puritan and Marprelatist, “to sell all his books and by [buy] a good Martin, and twoo or three hundreth of chatechismes of Geneva’s printe,” “and I warrant you will have learning enough.” Our pilgrims are much impressed by this reasoning of Stupido’s, and wander away with him into sober company. “I-faith,” begins one of them as they go out—“O sweare not, sweare not!” cries Stupido. Is this picture overdrawn of the danger which besets learning from those who seek to establish a conflict between it and religion, and who occasionally do so for no better reason than that, as they find, there after all goes some thinking to scholarship, while religion, *as it seems to them*, comes, like reading and writing, by nature?

In the next act a new temptation of a very different kind intercepts the pilgrims on their path. The priest or prophet of this seduction is Amoretto, the love-poet, Ovid in hand, and on his lips sonnets to his mistress's eye-brow where Love keeps his revels—Love, who

Daunces levaltoes in her speaking eye  
Dyes and is buried in her dimpled cheeke,  
Revives and quickens in her cherie<sup>1</sup> lips,  
&c.,                      &c.,                      &c.

This is the fashionable teacher of the golden youth of the day, the rimester whose sparrowlike twitterings of frivolity and sensuality tickle so many ears and enfeeble so many minds, the poetaster whom the indignation of so many a true poet has crushed with immortal contempt. Philomusus and Studioso have been mutually comparing their recent experiences, for each of them had nearly gone astray from the path of learning—the one into the low tavern, the other into the narrow tabernacle—

I kept the<sup>2</sup> Philomusus from moist Madido;  
Thou savest me latelie from dull Stupido—

Now, they have both come within reach of a charm, from which neither is man enough to fly—perhaps, alas! because both would think it unmanly to seem to shrink from it. So the fourth act closes. In the fifth, our pilgrims have arrived in *Philosophy*, the last stage of their journey, and Studioso, after coming forth with his companion from the toils of the artful Amoretto, congratulates his friend and himself on having

'Scaped frome poetrie's faire baites  
And sette our footinge in philosophie.

<sup>1</sup> I.e. cherry.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. thee.



Philomusus' answer is full of nobility, and irresistibly recalls in spirit, if not in form, more than one passage in those two great poets, of whom it is impossible not to be reminded by any genuine endeavour to separate the ore of true poetry from the dross with which it is too often mingled<sup>1</sup>:

Noe soure reforminge enimye of arte  
 Could do delightful poetrie more wronge  
 Than thy unwarie sliperie tonge hath done.  
 Are these the thanks thou givest for her mirth,  
 Wherewith shee did make shorte thy pilgrim's waye,  
 Made monthes seeme minutes spent in her faire soile?  
 O doe not wronge this musicke of the soule,  
 The fairest childe that ere the soule broughte fourthe,  
 Which none contemn but some rude foggie squires,  
 That knowe not to esteeme of witt or arte!  
 Nor epitaphe adorne his baser hearse  
 That in his lifetime cares not for a verse!

Too often it is the reader who finds in the poet what he has brought there himself; to the pure, true poetry must always be pure.

The friends agree, however, that their visit to the pleasant realms of poetry will not make the passage through philosophy less harsh, even though the skilful Aristotle be their guide. But they have not sojourned in it very long, before they come across Ingenioso, an old schoolfellow, who, as becomes a student that has passed, like Doctor Faustus, through the whole curriculum of studies is, like him, completely disillusioned. And why? Because he has found out that it does not *pay*. When they ask this knowing one to accompany

<sup>1</sup> See especially a famous passage in *Comus*, and the splendid lines in *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, 811 *seqq.*

them for the remaining portion of their journey, he scouts the notion, and is so completely disgusted with their green, unknowing youthfulness, that he cannot find it in his heart to speak to them in anything better than prose:

What! I travell to Parnassus? Why, I have burnt my bookes, splitted my pen, rent my papers, and curste the cooseninge hart that brought mee up to noe better fortune! I, after manie years studie, haveinge almoste brought my braine into a consumption, looking still when I shoulde meete with some good *Mæcenās* that liberallie would rewarde my deserts, I fed soe longe upon hope, till I had almoste starved....Goe to Parnassus? Alas! Apollo is banckroute, there is nothing but silver words and golden phrases for a man; his followers wante the golde, while tapsters, ostlers, carters, and coblers have [it]....Seest thou not<sup>1</sup> my hoste Johns of the Crowne, who latelie lived like a moule 6 years under the grounde in a cellar, and cried *Anon, Anon, Sir*, now is mounted upon a horse of twentie marke, and thinkes the earth too base to beare the weighte of his refined bodie. Why, would it not greeve a man of good spirit to see Hobson finde more money in the tayles of 12 jades than a scholler in 200 bookes? Why, Newman the cobbler will leave large legacies to his hairees while the posteritie of *humanissimi auditores*, and *esse posse videaturs* must be faine to be kept by the parishe! Turne home againe, unless you meane to be *vacui viatores*, and to curse your wittless heads in youre olde age for taking themselves to no better trades in their youth<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Here of course we have a series of Cambridge allusions of which only one is transparent, since every reader of Milton is acquainted with Hobson, the carrier, and we all have heard of Hobson's choice.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Hales, in the article cited above (which unluckily for me was not published till the very day of this lecture), argues from a striking parallel passage in *Pierce Penniless's Supplication*, and on other grounds, that the particular writer whom the probably Johnian author of the Parnassus plays, had in his eye when drawing the character of *Ingenioso*, was that famous Johnian wit, Thomas Nashe.

Is there or is there not any truth in this temptation, administered by premature disillusionment, a thing as unsuited to youth as premature baldness? I think the author has skilfully brought in this picture of worldly and mean-spirited despondency, decking itself in the garb of common sense, at the close of his transparent little allegory of the Student's Progress. The friends shake off an adviser so disheartening, at the very moment when success is so near.

Parnassus is at hande;

Nowe we have almost paste this wearie lande.

A small amount of foolery is, hereupon, introduced to give the audience a laugh before departing, or perhaps to make time for some little concluding scenic effect of the grove of the Muses on the laurel mountain; and then the friends, ere they rush in to claim the reward of their long and arduous struggle, turn to ask for the customary cheer from their friends in front.

Youe that love the Muses' deitie

Give our extemporall showe the *Plaudite*.

I hardly know whether you will, in conclusion, care for some account of the second play, the *First Return from Parnassus*, which, manifestly the result of the favour accorded to its predecessor, the very plain and I think very pleasing allegory just described, is conceived as its counterpart and converse. At all events, I will be as short as possible with my general sketch of this Second Part, in order to leave time for one or two quotations from it, which are of their kind as good as anything in the entire series. The play opens with an amusing dialogue between two ancients of days, the



old man who seven years since gave the two scholars Godspeed on their way to Parnassus, and a carrier of many years, and not a few humours, whom the other is now sending forth with a letter to the scholars in question. He (like other fathers who have sons at college, and who find their stay there last longer than had been originally expected) sends word to them that he is no further able to bear the expense of their academic sojourn there, since he requires what little is left to him for the maintenance of his own declining years. If they have not wasted their time on Parnassus, Apollo will assuredly keep them from poverty; but if they *have*—why, so much the worse for them! In the next scene, when Philomusus and Studioso receive the old man's letter on Parnassus hill, the idea of the piece is at once disclosed. The earlier play exhibited the contrast between the scholar's endeavour and the obstacles imposed in its way by the hardness of the world, the softness of the flesh, and (shall we say) the weakness of poor human nature, in general—but the goal was reached, and the victory gained. In the second piece we have the sequel, which is wholly ironical. The hill is climbed,—what then? The sacred grove has been entered,—*cui bono*? It is time to return from Parnassus, to go down hill and back into the world, to leave

These murmuring springs, this pleasant grove, this lyre—  
to descend

'Mongst russet coates and mossy<sup>1</sup> idiotts,  
and to find the value set by the world upon those privi-

<sup>1</sup> A favourite epithet of the author's, implying, from an academical point of view, the opposite of the German *bemoost*.

leges which we toiled so hard to compass. Our pleasant years of learning are at an end; our hard years of wandering begin; and it is best to make up our minds to it.

- Philom.* Let us resolve to wander in the worlde,  
 And reap our fortunes wheresoe're they growe.  
 Some thackéd cottage, or some cuntrie hall,  
 Some porche, some belfry, or some scrivener's stall,  
 Will yealde some harbour to our wandringe heades.
- Stud.* Be merie then, in spite of Fortune's change!  
 We'll finde some lucke, or through the worlde wee'l  
 range.

This is the *Return from Parnassus*—a different thing from the *Pilgrimage to Parnassus*. The ascending traveller saw before him the golden rays of the morning sun gilding the mountain tops; and all was hope, all was infinity. The descending traveller is lucky if, before the daylight has gone, he can find a comfortable fireside. If not, he will e'en have to occupy a fireless chamber; and men without money in their purse *have* been known to sleep in a hayloft.

We cannot follow Philomusus and Studioso, who are soon joined by Ingenioso, the more experienced and more cynical student, whom you will remember from the first piece, through all their experiences and adventures. His company encourages them, and they beg him to put them in still better spirits by "drinking" a sentence or so to them out of the last new pamphlet by Robert Greene, the *magister artium utriusque academice*. Ingenioso is not unsuited to be their mentor in the illiberal arts which they are now essaying, and offers a sample of his skill in laying a "snare to catch a dottrell"

by his doings, first with a rich patron's serving-man (who thinks him a "mad Greeke," and having "lov'd such lads of metall as thou seems to be" from his infancy, purposes to employ him in composing a love-letter to "our chambre maid"), and afterwards with the patron himself. But this latter scene, though very comical, somewhat too much resembles Molière in his least refined mood. The academical vagrants are next joined by Luxurioso, an old fellow-student whom Ingenioso hails with a true Bohemian welcome: "What, ould pipe of tobacco! Why, what's to paye? Give me thy liquid hande! How haste thou maintained thy nose in that red sute of apparell ere since I left thee?" He, too, is for the great world of London, and the vast possibilities of its literary openings; and his fond frivolity cheers the departure of the company, who listen for the last time to the sound of the music played by the Muses themselves on Parnassus hill:

*Stud.*     Fairewell, Parnassus! farwell, faire content!

*Philom.*   Welcome, good sorrowe! farewell, meriment!

*Lux.*       Hange sorrow! care will kill a catt!

He may well treat his catastrophe in this wise; for it is afterwards represented in a less favourable light by a creditor of his, Simon the tapster:

And is Luxurio gone? the answer is, he is gone! Ey! but we will say, Will not Luxurio returne againe? I answer, I knowe not. Ey, but some will objecte and saye, Did not Luxurio strike off the score before he wente? I answer, he did not.

There is a good deal of sporting of this kind—though we know that sport to one man may be something quite different to another—among the Parnassian tradesmen



who furnish forth a comical scene at the beginning of the second act of the play. But the birds have flown; and the first of them we meet with in the next scene is Philomusus, with a black frieze coat and, as he confesses, in a very sable state of mind. He has, in fact, taken to the employment of a sexton, a condition of life which must be allowed to be low down enough in itself, but is rendered still less endurable, when the surviving relatives of your customers are very particular about your service being expeditious. Thus, "harke you, Sexton, I pray you bury him quicklie"; says an excellent son, referring to an excellent father, "for he was a good man, and I knowe he is in a better place<sup>1</sup>, that's fitter for him than this scurvey worlde, and I woulde not have him alive again to his hindrance: it will be better for him and mee too, for ther's a greater change with mee within this two hours, for the ignorant people that before calde mee *Will* nowe call mee *William*, and those of the finer sort call mee good man *Percevall*." However, when *Studioso* crosses the stage to find his old fellow-student plying the grave-digger's lowly trade, it appears that there are deeper depths even than this; for *Studioso* has been obliged to become a private tutor. The conditions of his engagement are stated by him as follows:—and there is every reason to believe that they are historically typical, for the most salient of them is identical with that given in a contemporary satire<sup>2</sup> on the same subject.

<sup>1</sup> "We *hope* he's in a better place."—Swift.

<sup>2</sup> Hall's *Satires*, Book II, Sat. 6:

"All these observ'd, he could contented be  
To give five marks and winter livery."

1. That I shoulde faire no worse than their owne husholde servants did; have breade and beare and bacon enoughe...
2. I shoulde lye cleane in hempen sheets and a good mattress, to keepe me from growing pursie.
3. That I shoulde waite at meals.
4. That I shoulde worke all harvest time...
5. That I shoulde never teache my yonge master his lesson without doinge my dutie as becometh mee to the offspringe of such a scholler.
6. That I shoulde complane to his mother when he coulde not say his lesson. And lastlie, for all this, my wages muste be five marke a yeare, and some caste out of his forlorne wardropp that his ploughmen woulde scarce accept of.

Soon afterwards, *Studioso* and his pupil appear on the stage together, and the tutor coaxes his precious charge into consenting to receive a lesson in construing, wherein the boy states the word *Athenæ* to be a noun adjective and not a noun substantive, and, when the tutor sets him right, insists like a high-spirited young gentleman on his own opinion: "I saye it's a nounge adjective, and if I feche (e.g. fetch) my mother to you I'll make you confess as muche." Alas for the pride of *Parnassus*, which ends in a B.A. being set to bend such tender sprigs as these!

But there are worse trials in store, and *Ingenioso* has to submit to what, for the scholar and the real man of letters, is the sorest of all inflictions—the necessity of listening with attentive eyebrow and responsive lip to the foolish pretender, the self-condemning though not self-condemned poetaster, the impostor who imposes

on none but himself, in a word (if you will accept an Elizabethan term) the *gull*.

Nowe, gentlemen, youue may laughe if you will, for here comes a gull.

The scenes which follow (Act III, sc. i, and Act IV, sc. i) are the gems of the comedy, but, as it is impossible to cite them entire here, a reference must suffice. Gullio is, at times, a captain by courtesy—as Spenser has it—

Be you the soldier, for you likest are  
For manly semblance, and small skill in warre;

but his own ideal of life is to “make the ladies happy.” With Sir Philip Sidney, to whom in his days he had “not unfitly been likened,” he liked to compare and to contrast himself; though his figures and ornaments of speech are usually taken from an author whom his interlocutor (Ingenioso) promptly recognises as “sweete Mr Shakespeare.” In the next scene, Gullio puts Ingenioso through a series of specimen verses “in an ambrosiall veyne that must kiss” the hand of his mistress—to wit, Chaucer’s, Spenser’s, and sweet Mr Shakespeare’s, whose *Venus and Adonis* vein distinctly wins the day.

Let mee heare Mr Shakspear’s veyne...let this duncified worlde esteeme of Spencer and Chaucer; I’le worshipp sweet Mr Shakspeare, and to honoure him will lay his Venus and Adonis under my pillowe, as wee reade of one (I doe not well remember his name, but I am sure he was a kinge) slept with Homer under his bed’s heade.

Was it even so? Was “Mr Shakespeare” the delight of fine gentlemen and their imitators, the Gullios of the period, and less readily palatable to the academical scholars and wits who allowed some measure of



merit to Chaucer, never dissociated from Cambridge, and to Master Edmund Spenser, late of Pembroke Hall? These passages suggest many curious reflexions, which it is too late to dwell upon to-night. I will only remind you of one circumstance. These implied strictures on Shakespeare in the First *Return from Parnassus* are not altogether out of accord with the compliments paid him in the first act of the Second, where he is commended for his love-poetry, but where a wish is expressed that he might treat a graver subject. But, in a later and equally celebrated scene in the same (Second) *Return* the two actors, Kemp and Burbage, Shakespeare's associates, are introduced on the stage, and what have they to say of the favourite of the Gullios? Why, that "few of the University (men) pen plaies well, they smell too much of that writer *Ovid*, and that writer *Metamorphosis*, and talke too much of *Proserpina* and *Juppiter*. Why, here's our fellow Shakspeare puts them all downe, and *Ben Jonson* too." The professional actor is here upholding his fellow-professionals against the University wits; and plays, we know, were in the specious times of great Elizabeth barely esteemed poetry. Yet, somehow, the author of the *Parnassus Plays* seems in this passage to offer amends to "Mr Shakespeare," whose vein was so precious to Gullio.

I have no time left for more than the most rapid winding-up, the drift of which you will already have anticipated. The travellers from Parnassus are all cruelly disappointed by the cold world beneath. Ingenioso, the cynic, is cured of his cynicism by the abject folly of his would-be patron, Gullio, of whom he finally rids himself in a sudden return of manliness. Luxurio,

some of whose concluding euphuisms would have been well worth quoting to you, is beyond cure; or, at least, with him disease and remedy are identical. But he can at least do what he has hitherto done as a bad habit, on principle and for a purpose. He gives up bad poetry, though he cannot give up good liquor:

Farewell, thou mustie worlde! I meane to beare no coals,  
And therefore will I straight drinke out these seeinge holes.

As for the two original heroes of the action, their farewell is in a more sober and more serious strain. Everything else having failed to which a scholar and man of letters can turn his hand, Ingenioso resolves to become a corrector for the Press—a resource which, by the way, had fed and warmed many a true scholar of the great Renaissance age. But the satiric wit of our academical playwright, at the very last, makes Studioso suggest another refuge—*Rome or Rheims*; and to this both our scholars declare their intention of repairing. This final stab is a subtle one indeed. The lowest depth to which the man of letters, the scholar, the soldier in the army of intellectual progress can sink is that of selling himself, mind and soul, for a mess of pottage.

Is there an excuse for such an exhibition of academical Bohemianism *in extremis*? Is the plea valid which is offered by Ingenioso in the last scene of our play, when, speaking of the foolish world and its treatment of scholars he proudly exclaims

They have the shame, though wee the miserie?

Hardly so. As Thackeray was never tired of preaching, Bohemianism, whether academical or other, is *without* any general excuse. But it is not without its pathos, as

the instinct of many generations of readers and audiences has apprised them. These old plays, to which because of many associations we turn with a smile, it is difficult to close without a sigh. Let us hope that, among the gowned auditors, who listened and applauded in the venerable hall of the grand old College, there were some who said to themselves, without undue self-sufficiency: Not such shall be, not such need be, *our* Return from Parnassus.

[1920. I have had some hesitation about reprinting this paper, which was written more than a generation ago, soon after the discovery of two of the Parnassus Plays, and which was intended merely to give an account of them to a College Club—after the fashion, though not with the skill of the late W. S. Lilly, when distilling the substance of a notable literary work into a few pages. Since that date, the plays as a whole have attracted the attention which the trilogy merited, and which the late Dr Mullinger and the late Professor Arber recognised to be their due; and quite lately (in June, 1919) Mr William Poel brought them on the stage in the Jacobean Hall of the Society of Apothecaries of London. It was not the least stimulating impulse which students of the Elizabethan drama and its history have owed to him, and his *Notes* on the plays have a value of their own, more especially where he shows reason for his belief that more than one author had a hand in the writing of the trilogy. The personality of its author—or its principal author—cannot, however, be said to be any longer an unsolved problem; and I take this opportunity of urging my friend Sir I. Gollancz to collect into a volume the papers which some years since he contributed to *The Athenæum*, and which contain one of the most brilliant readings of a literary riddle known to me in this or in any other field of research. It would be an unfair use of a rapid summary of his arguments with which he has at my request been good enough to furnish me, were I to print it in this corner of my half-antiquated address; but, as is well known to the world of letters, he has to all intents and purposes justified the prediction of Dr Macray, that, if the passage cited at the bottom of p. 413 *ante* could be satisfactorily interpreted, the trilogy would be revealed. Sir I. Gollancz's identification of the author, or principal author, of the plays with the dramatist John Day (or Dey) *who was sent down from Caius in 1597*, is, in point of fact, complete, except in so far that Day's Cheshire origin still remains to be proved. But this particular stone is not indispensable in the mosaic, and may yet be supplied. The literary significance of the result, together with that of other almost certain identifications of characters accompanying it, of course forms the most important part of the achievement.]



## 15. THE FEMALE REBELLION

(*The Owens College Magazine*, Jubilee Number, 1901.)

PERHAPS I ought to confess at once, that the ensuing observations on the old play of *The Female Rebellion* will have little concern with its merits or demerits, and still less with its theme. So far as this latter is concerned, the tragicomedy in question belongs to a group of plays signally characteristic of the turbid political period from which it unmistakably dates—the period marked by the agitations that culminated in the popular triumph of Shaftesbury, and that ended, shortly afterwards, in his discomfiture and flight from England. His actions of *scandalum magnatum* early in 1682, against divers persons concerned in the attempt to bring him to trial, are plainly referred to in *The Female Rebellion*, which is full, from cover to cover, of the violent political and religious partisanship that, from Dryden and Lee downwards—if downwards it was—disgraced the English stage in the last few years of Charles II's reign. In the general treatment of the theme, which is of course intertwined with an inevitable story of heroic love, and which indicates that the writer had made a useful study of Dryden's plays from *The Maiden Queen* to *The Spanish Friar*, the note of originality is conspicuous by its absence. Its place is inadequately supplied by the not very brilliant innovation of laying the scene of the regulation Whig plot and Levellers' rebellion in an Amazonian community. This device may have been suggested by some previous

“Amazonian play”—possibly by one of the three composed by John Weston, a writer of the early Restoration age, none of whose efforts, any more than *The Female Rebellion* itself, are known to have been subjected to the test of performance. We read, too, of an *Amazons’ Masque* performed before Queen Elizabeth so far back as 1578–9, which may conceivably have suggested the anti-masque of male buffoons in our tragicomedy. Or, again, an inspiration may have been derived from the fashion which had come up not long after the first appearance of actresses on the English stage, and on which Dryden descants in the prologue to his *Maiden Queen* (1672), of committing the performance of an entire play to women only. There, certainly, was no intention in the mind of the author of *The Female Rebellion* to put forward in dramatic form a plea on behalf of the rights, or even a complaint as to the wrongs, of women. Incidentally, to be sure, it is observed by one of the Amazons in the play, that the intellectual shallowness of women is due to the fact that the education which men grant to them “stifles their intellect, for if their lives lay on’t, you’ll not allow ’em their book.” But, in accordance with contemporary English feeling, which on the subject of the collective intellectual advancement of women lagged behind that of some other countries, our play is in its general tone Conservative on this head, as it is in every other respect. Indeed, although in the Amazonian polity itself the subordinate place assigned to the unlucky males seems well suited to the grossness, not to say brutishness, of the representative Trojans who disport themselves before us, while the female personages of the action,

whether royal or rebel, are all of the heroic type, yet our sympathies are engaged for an order of things with which Amazonian principles are in the long run irreconcilable. Thus, Queen Orithya's love for her generous foe King Sagalus, is intended to seem not less fully entitled to triumph at the end than is her legitimate monarchical right (established by means of evidence such as is usually taken *in camerâ*); and triumph it does, after many hairbreadth escapes, including both "burning pincers" and the bowl. *Per contra*, we are expected to shake our heads, more in anger than in sorrow, over the misguided ladies whose aspiring ambition sets on foot, and whose untamable temper carries through, in defiance of both human and divine law, a rebellion seeking in vain to justify itself by the theory of contract. Who could be attracted by the fiery "Major-General" Penthesilea, with her

Were we all made to serve one woman's call,  
Not more than all heaven's eyes to watch this ball;

or the astute and hypocritical "Lieutenant-General" Antiopa; or the "self-conceited Privy-Councillor" Thalestris, and the rest; or even by the Queen's kinswoman and favourite General, Nicostrate, who goes over to the insurgents when she finds that the Queen is too magnanimous, and as she thinks, too short-sighted, to accept her proffered self-sacrifice?

So much, and no more, as to the general nature of the action and characters of this play, which is by no means put together with notable dramatic skill, and which cannot be said to be distinguished by any conspicuous merits of style or versification. It contains, indeed, a few passages which would, I think, strike



even a casual reader by a certain sententious force or pregnancy, reminding him of an earlier dramatic epoch than that of the Restoration; while it consistently remains true to the moral standard which in the epilogue the author claims to have set before him:

Your smiles, then, he'll ne'er purchase at the price  
Of shame, or suffer fame for witty vice.

On the other hand, the serious or pathetic scenes have little in them of life; and the comic are of the kind which the experienced reader at once recognises as leather and prunella—and these, too, of a very inexpensive sort.

Why, then, it may be asked, should I have brought this tragicomedy under the notice of the readers of the *Owens College Union Magazine*; and why should it have been in the year 1872 disinterred from a MS in the Hunterian Museum of the University of Glasgow by Mr Alexander Smith, printed by him for private circulation, with a series of notes contributed in part by the late John Payne Collier, and criticised by the same Mr Alexander Smith in a remarkably acute and exhaustive notice contributed by him to a Glasgow newspaper<sup>1</sup>?

Some twenty years ago, my uncle, the late Dr W. A. Greenhill, himself a learned physician, and an accomplished man of letters, who had long made a special study of the life and works of Sir Thomas Browne, and who had recently published an admirable little edition of the *Religio Medici* and the *Christian Morals*, directed my attention to the rumour of the existence of a play

<sup>1</sup> This notice, by Mr Smith's courtesy, is now before me; and I beg to thank him very sincerely for transmitting it to me through my friend Mr A. A. Jack.

by his favourite English classic. As it chanced, it was only after Dr Greenhill's death that I was put on the track of Mr Alexander Smith's quarto impression of *The Female Rebellion*, and of the enquiry into the question as to Sir Thomas Browne's supposed authorship of the play contributed by its Editor to the *North British Daily Mail*, of December 10th, 1872. After a careful examination of the play, I am not aware that anything material remains to be added to the evidence which was adduced by Mr Smith in this review, and which led him to what, felicitously borrowing one of Sir Thomas Browne's own phrases, he there described as his own "wavering conclusion" in favour of his conjecture.

External evidence there is practically none. We know that Sir Thomas Browne did not die until October 19th, 1682, and that he was in full possession of his faculties, and apparently in good health, till within a short time before his death. The play was, beyond all dispute, written soon after the actions, already mentioned, brought by Shaftesbury in the early part of the same year. It might at first sight seem quite improbable that the grave physician, who, when a comparatively young man of thirty, had described his own "common conversation" as "austere," and his "behaviour" as "full of rigour," should in the last year of his life have betaken himself to writing a play for "the well-trod stage"; more especially since he had published nothing for nearly a quarter of a century, and since, during his later years, he seems to have chiefly devoted himself to scientific observations and experiments. But there is, of course, nothing absolutely impossible in such an act of desipience, and in his younger days at all events, as

Mr Alexander Smith noted, the idea of writing a play was not foreign to the author of the *Religio Medici*, though he speaks of it only as of a visionary fancy. "In one dream," he says, "I can compose a whole comedy, behold the action, apprehend the jests, and laugh myself awake at the conceits thereof." Rather more to the point is, perhaps, another passage in the same book, in which he half-reluctantly confesses to a love of the drama. "Yet can I," he writes, "weep most seriously at a play, and receive with true passion the counterfeit grief of those known and professed impostures." And I may add—for what it is worth—that among the MSS in the possession of Sir Thomas Browne and his son Edward, enumerated in the fourth volume of Wilkin's edition, are to be found three plays, viz., Lord Orrery's tragedy of *Zoroastres*, a comedy unnamed, and Middleton's allegorical comedy of *A Game at Chess*.

If Sir Thomas Browne, in the decline of his years, had actually been tempted to essay a species of composition so foreign to his habits and associations, he must have had some very special reason or motive for such a proceeding. This motive could have been no other than that which the prologue claims for the effort which is to follow:

If spiritual actors  
(Wise hypocrites) profane the stage, being factors  
There for fanatic ends, it may be found,  
Whom pulpits poison, can from plays grow sound.

In other words, he must have hoped that his belated dramatic effort would prove of some real service, however slight, to the political cause which he undoubtedly had at heart. Sir Thomas Browne was, no doubt, a



staunch loyalist, and the interest which he took in the political questions of his day was, as his letters at the time of the parliamentary election of 1679 show, by no means one of theory only. On the other hand, it is hard to imagine that on ecclesiastical subjects, which in this age so deeply entered into political life, Sir Thomas Browne ever allowed himself to be moved to speak with a reckless violence of partisanship and a factious bitterness of prejudice, such as disfigure this tragicomedy like so many contemporary plays. His own "fantasies in divinity" he may have been habitually careful not to suffer to "grow into heresies." But towards the opinions of other men he could only have abnegated his consistent attitude of perfect tolerance—a tolerance founded on those conceptions of religion which induced Samuel Duncan, the Quaker, to offer him the embrace of spiritual fellowship—if, for reasons of extraordinary cogency, he had resolved not only to write an anonymous drama, but to assume an idiosyncrasy wholly unlike his own in writing it. Finally, after what has been already said as to the very slight bearing this tragicomedy really has upon the problem of the relations of women to the intellectual life of the age, it would be useless to seek in it for any parallel to certain half-satirical passages concerning the female sex in the *Religio Medici*, or to the more didactic self-deliverance of the author in the *Christian Morals*: "Let masculine and feminine accomplishments adorn their respective subjects; however, unite not the vices of both sexes in one." Neither the playful humour of the bachelor philosopher, who was so soon to enlarge his experience of life, nor his well-balanced conception of the best

female education, which was also that of Descartes—and may I add of Molière—could have stood in urgent need of expression through the very unsafe medium of the extravagant accidents of a romantic drama.

*Primâ facie*, then, a cautious critic would be slow to suspect Sir Thomas Browne of having in the last years of his life engaged in the composition of a stage-play, and more especially of having perpetrated one of the type of *The Female Rebellion*. Still, what is improbable is not always impossible; and, while the general construction and arrangement of this piece are certainly suggestive of a writer who was a new hand at dramatic composition, its literary style and versification are neither those of a beginner, nor altogether irreconcilable with the suggestion of the particular authorship of Sir Thomas Browne. It is true that there is little to be found here of that always eccentric but often highly felicitous employment of Latin words and forms which few, if any, English writers had used before Sir Thomas Browne, and few have used after him, except Charles Lamb, who did it partly from piety and partly “for fun.” It is also true that the play offers no illustrations, so far as I have observed, of those divine paradoxes which, where they are the most daring, seem freshest from the eternal fount, but which are, I think, much more characteristic of the *Religio Medici* than of its author’s later books. But, apart from those passages to which, as will be noted immediately, more or less precise parallels have been discovered, or may still be discoverable, in Sir Thomas Browne’s published works, the play is marked by an occasional sententiousness of a not quite common

order. Already in the Prologue, our attention is arrested by the thoughtful rather than powerful couplet:

War's the worst judgment; then, how barbarous are  
Those who entail upon all perpetual war.

In the first scene of the first act warfare is described as a centaur,

Half man, half beast; 'tis manly to subdue,  
To destroy is brutish;

and, in many subsequent places which I must leave my readers to mark for themselves, a wish is perceptible on the part of the dramatist to "moralise" his dialogue, in the most direct sense of the term. On the other hand, it would, I think, be futile to look in this play for any of those gleams of wit which so frequently light up the pages of the *Religio Medici*, or for any striking illustrations of that spirit which I hardly know how to define, but which I might almost call an other-world sympathy—so distinctive of Sir Thomas Browne as compared with any other great essayist of our own or of French literature. The "observer," indeed, is with us, and that the play was written by one familiar with medical science, and addicted to dissection (see Act II, sc. iv), there can be no reasonable doubt. But where is the sage who, with just enough of self-satisfaction to induce an angel to raise his eyebrow, longed that Humility might teach others, "as it hath instructed me, to contemplate the infinite and incomprehensible distance between the Creator and the Creature," and might "prevent these arrogant disputes of reason," and arguments asserting "the definitive sentence of God, either to Heaven or Hell"?



Of two features, indeed, which were conspicuous in Sir Thomas Browne's moral and intellectual idiosyncrasy, we seem to meet with a reflexion in the course of this drama. The one is that hatred of the mob or multitude, in which the author of the *Religio Medici* recognised, as he thought, "the great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion"; the other is that disregard of the fear of death, on which Dr Johnson so characteristically comments in Sir Thomas Browne, and which in *The Female Rebellion* reappears in the couplet:

Dying's an act so short, who death doth fear  
Dreads that which has no being anywhere.

But in the dramatist these strong or profound sentiments become mere commonplaces of politics *à la mode* and of "heroical" ethics, such as could scarcely be expected to be missing in a drama of this age and type. I ought perhaps to add that, while in some of the prose dialogue, as in that quoted from Act III, sc. ii, by Mr Alexander Smith, a certain resemblance may be found to the manner of the *Religio Medici* and the easier diction of the *Vulgar Errors*, the verse, at least in so far as the rimed couplets are concerned, has no very different ring from that remaining to us from Sir Thomas Browne's hand, which, like most of the verse of Dryden's period, has a more modern sound in our ears than its prose. Curiously enough, the *Evening Colloquy with God* in the *Religio Medici* (which it is impossible to read without recalling Ken's hymn) shows that Sir Thomas Browne's was not a 'prentice hand in those four-foot rimed couplets to which, apparently for no reason but that of variety, resort is had at a critical point (Act III, sc. i) of the action of *The Female Rebellion*.

Last, but not least, we have the coincidences of detail between passages in *The Female Rebellion* and others in the published works of Sir Thomas Browne, which have been collected by Mr Alexander Smith, and on whose cumulative value his case must be allowed largely to depend. The most striking of these is the reference (Act IV, sc. i) to "the powder of projection, too beneficial for a subject." The only authority extant as to Dr John Dee's famous powder was discovered by the elder Disraeli, and consists of a passage in a letter written in 1674 by Sir Thomas Browne to Elias Ashmole, where Browne speaks of Dr John Dee's son, Dr Arthur Dee, as his old acquaintance, and of the magician himself as having lost his activity. I may add that, in an earlier letter to the same correspondent, Browne says that Dr Dee prescribed some of his Transmuting Powder to Queen Elizabeth, who, having tried it, sought to get Kelly out of prison. Less convincing, though curious, is the mention (Act v, sc. i) of the "new digestive" and its bone-softening powers. This invention, of which there is an elaborate account in Evelyn's *Diary* under the date April, 1682, is described by Sir Thomas Browne in terms similar to those used in the play; and its author, Denys Papin, F.R.S., as well as his father Nicolas, are both mentioned in his correspondence. Passing to matters with which Sir Thomas Browne was concerned merely as a writer, we meet with a whole series of passages in the *Vulgar Errors* and elsewhere, which illustrate the references and allusions wherein the play abounds to facts (or supposed facts) in medical science, or in "civil and natural" history. The boneless lamprey, the epicene hare, the self-mutilating beaver,

the amphisbena with a head at both ends, together with the Egyptians worshipping darkness, and the Scythians turning the skulls of their foes into drinking-bowls—all occur in the play and have their counter-parts in the *Works*; and the former perorates with the *simile* of the loadstone, supplying what might be described as a poetic transcript of a passage in Sir Thomas Browne's wellknown disquisition. But the most striking of all the coincidences noted by Mr Smith is to be found in the stage-direction of the scene in which King Sagalus, supposed to be poisoned, appears to his murderesses as his own ghost, but afterwards reveals that he has taken antidotes. The scene is laid in "a temple, with a charnel-house lozenge-wise." In his *Cyrus's Garden*, Sir Thomas Browne states that "the old sepulchral tomb in the market-place of Megara was in the form of a lozenge, readily made out by the composure of the body."

Such, stated at as great a length as seemed permissible on the present occasion, is the evidence on which this play, by no means praiseworthy as a whole, but possessed of features which prohibit our calling it contemptible, has been ascribed to one of the choicest of English writers. For myself, I do not think that the conjecture, however plausible it may seem, can for one moment be accepted. The author of *The Female Rebellion* was beyond doubt a diligent and appreciative reader of Sir Thomas Browne, with whose political opinions his own were in general accord, while between their religious views there was some sort of superficial agreement; whose personal tastes and pursuits he, to a large extent, shared and followed, and of whose profession he was



very likely himself a member. Peradventure, Dr Norman Moore might be willing to pronounce whether any serious risk would be incurred by shifting Mr Alexander Smith's conjecture from the father to the son, and whether there would be any grave impropriety in attributing the authorship of this orphaned tragedy to Dr Edward Browne?

## 16. SIR HENRY WOTTON

(*The Quarterly Review*, January, 1909.)

SOME biographies (the remark may conceivably apply to books belonging to other branches of literature) need never have been written at all; others, though they may have been composed with the most excellent of motives, produce no effect but that of closing their subject to adequate treatment by a competent hand. Fortunately for the fame of an English worthy, whose personality has fascinated many generations of his fellow-countrymen interested in history or letters, it has been reserved for Mr Logan Pearsall Smith to make the first sustained attempt to raise an enduring monument of Sir Henry Wotton<sup>1</sup>. The volumes now before us contain, not only as ample a selection from his letters, both public and private, as it was practicable to reproduce within moderate compass, but a biographical account of the writer which may to all intents and purposes—save such few additions and possible modifications as may conveniently be added in a later edition—be regarded as final.

As to Wotton's letters, though the bulk of those included in the *Reliquiæ* (down to the last edition) are reprinted in their proper places in these volumes, together with such of his public and private letters as had already found their way into print elsewhere, those

<sup>1</sup> *The Life and Letters of Sir Henry Wotton*. By Logan Pearsall Smith. 2 vols. Oxford, Clarendon Press. 1907.

now for the first time made public by Mr Pearsall Smith outnumber the rest by something like 100. The total number to be found in these volumes is 511; but Mr Smith informs his readers that, all in all, he has come across nearly 1000 letters and despatches from the same indefatigable hand, and that, if reproduced at full length, they would occupy about ten goodly volumes. Thus, the task of selection was serious; added to which, Mr Smith has, as a biographer and annotator, supplied much new information, instead of confining his attention to the letters and despatches deposited in the Record Office, the British Museum, and other libraries and archives, British and foreign. He has put to good use the transcripts, made from the Venetian Archives by Mr Horatio Brown and himself, of the numerous speeches delivered by Wotton before the Collegio of the Senate, as well as other materials found in the Venetian, Florentine, and remoter Archives (such as the De Fresne-Canaye correspondence and, though in this case more sparingly, the letters of the German Protestant Princes and their agents in the second volume of Ritter's invaluable collection).

The admirable apparatus of notes to these volumes is supplemented by Appendices, including a tabular survey of Wotton's despatches, and a very useful series of short biographical accounts of his chief friends, correspondents, and associates. Yet another Appendix furnishes, from the Burley *Commonplace Book*, under the heading, "Table-Talk," a number of good things sufficient to show that Sir Henry was at least as brilliant a talker as he was a writer. The *provenance* of this "Table-Talk" is open to no reasonable doubt, which is perhaps



more than can be said for the letters, derived from the same source, which Mr Smith believes to have been written to Donne by Wotton when in Ireland. That he was actually there—a fact doubted by at least one previous biographer—is, as Mr Smith says, definitively proved by his letter to his fellow secretary, Reynolds, dated April 19, 1599. Although, much obscurity continues to surround this part of Wotton's life, and his share in Essex's expeditions, both Spanish and Irish. Mr Smith has removed all reasonable doubt on the subject by printing a letter signed by Wotton and dated from Dublin, in addition to Essex's statement (in a *Relation*) that he had employed Wotton in the Treaty with Tyrone, and Wotton's own to the Doge of Venice, that he had been sent by Essex to Tyrone's Camp. We should, by the way, have liked to know Mr Smith's opinion of the manuscript account of Wotton's journey from "Diepe," described in the *Athenæum* of May 6, 1899, as perhaps the most interesting of the various Elizabethan documents among the Phillips MSS<sup>1</sup>.

Of one side of Wotton's intellectual activity Mr Smith has deliberately abstained from taking more than incidental notice, though it happens to be that to which Wotton owes nine-tenths of his popular fame. But, in the first place, as Mr Smith says, Wotton's poetry has been collected and digested in a definitive form by Mr Hannah, whose elucidation of the poems is generally accessible. Moreover, notwithstanding the exquisite

<sup>1</sup> When did Wotton travel by Dieppe? His passage out in 1589 was to Stade. Donne's lines (i, 27) suggest, but by no means prove, that Wotton was in France at some time during this sojourn abroad.

charm of more than one of these pieces, they were to their author mere ornamental *parerga* of his life, and not an essential part even of the leisure which he loved, any more than of the business with which, even in leisure, his soul was bound up. Of the poetic gem which rightly adorns any *corolla* of English lyrics—the imperishable lines to the Queen of Bohemia, possibly (as is hinted by Mr Smith) the felicitous elaboration of a Petrarchian suggestion—Wotton's biographer is doubtless well warranted in writing, "Neither Queen nor ambassador probably gave, amid the cares of State, a second thought to the little poem." In general, though the phrase is rather two-edged, he seems to have "affected a reserve about his writings, especially his poems"; and this shyness (not uncommon in men of the world in days when "interviewing" had not yet been invented) led him at a much later date to commend to the Queen of Bohemia, as if it had been by an unknown hand, the exquisite couplet on the death of her former lady-in-waiting, a year or two after that of her husband, Wotton's nephew, Sir Albertus Morton:

He first deceas'd. She for a little tried  
To live without him; lik'd it not; and died.

Towards the admiring sympathiser of his latter days, in the rich drapery of whose commemorative tribute his more tranquil virtues lie as it were swathed, he could show no such reticence; but the hymn, "Oh thou great Power," which, as composed on his sick-bed, he sent to Izaak Walton, is too full of conceits to be palatable to modern readers.

If we turn from Wotton's poems to his prose compositions "intended for publication," we find, as has

been generally acknowledged, little that is in itself deserving of very special praise, but much that is characteristic both of the man and of the times. Of the longest and most important among the prose works attributed to him, but published rather later than the rest, *The State of Christendom*, his authorship cannot be said to be absolutely certain. Mr Smith has devoted a special Appendix to a critical examination of the date and authorship of this tractate. Some years ago (in a letter to the *Athenæum*, dated June 18, 1901) Mr Charles Hughes, the editor of Fynes Morison's *Itinerary*, conclusively showed that *The State of Christendom* was written, not, as has been generally assumed, during Wotton's exile in 1600 and 1601, but some seven years earlier, being in fact a survey of the current politics of 1594; and Mr Smith has independently arrived at the same conclusion, which must be pronounced incontrovertible. On the other hand, Mr Smith rebuts Mr Hughes' "inference that, the treatise being autobiographical, Wotton was already at this time a political suspect," by disproving the former, and generally accepted, assumption. A comparison of dates leaves no room for doubt on this head. But the question remains, whether *The State of Christendom* was written by Wotton in an assumed character or was not written by him at all. Mr Smith seems rather to incline to the latter solution, but feels bound, in view of the conflict of internal evidence, at present to accept the former. Thus the question of authorship must, we fear, unless some external proof should opportunely present itself, be left in the very nicely balanced condition which is abhorred by so many controversialists.



Among the other prose publications which bear Wotton's name, I am not aware that justice has been done by any previous biographer or critic to the earliest of the whole number (leaving the *State of Christendom* out of the question). *The Elements of Architecture* was published early in 1624, a few months before the competition for the vacant Provostship of Eton was settled in Wotton's favour; nor is it going too far to connect book and candidature, since not only was the first copy of *The Elements* sent to the King, but the second (now in the British Museum) was presented to Charles, Prince of Wales, to whose artistic sympathies it directly appealed, and who did not fail to intervene on the author's behalf in the election. Nothing could be better in its way than Mr Smith's analysis of an essay undeservedly overlooked. It is justly described by him as a little book in which the ideals and standards of art current at the time among travelled and cultivated Englishmen can best be studied. Though the theme of the essay is considerably narrower than its title implies, being in fact little more than a collection of notes and suggestions for the construction of a "great country palace," the work

is of interest, not only as the first book on the subject in the English language, but as an exposition of the taste of the most accomplished connoisseur of the time, a time when there was in England a truer love of beauty, and a juster appreciation of art, than there had been before, or indeed than there has ever been since. The reign of Elizabeth was rather an age of great creative energy than of conscious and refined love of beauty. But the period which followed—the later reign of James, the time of Buckingham, of Charles I, of Inigo Jones, and of Van Dyck's visits—is the true period, for the plastic

arts at least, of the Renaissance in England. The refined taste shared by Buckingham and Charles was diffused from the Court among many of the great nobles; Lord Arundel had brought to England his marbles and pictures; other collections of Italian pictures were being made, and Inigo Jones had introduced the noble Palladian forms of architecture, which were now replacing the more quaint and barbarous models of Elizabethan building. This architectural Renaissance in England, though to a certain extent revived at a later date by Christopher Wren and his school, was but brief, and came to no full fruition....The scattered remains of this period have, however, a beauty which makes us linger, not without regret, on the short moment in English history when it seemed as if the poetic splendour of the Elizabethan age might be crowned by great achievements in other arts.

On some of these achievements, it may be added, Wotton's successors may, at this day, still look as upon a dream which has, in part at least, been realised, whether the eye of the modern diplomatist turns from the ambitious semi-revival of the Foreign Office to the graceful beauty of the Banqueting Hall on the other side of the street, or whether the Etonian, issuing forth from the great Chapel of King's, condescends to glance at what, to many Cambridge men, is the most sympathetic of all the architectural beauties of their University—the Palladian façade by lawn and river of the neighbouring College of Clare.

Mr Smith has something to say of the *Survey of Education*, dedicated to King Charles, with a promise, should "so excellent a judge in all kinds of structure" not accord to the work his approval, to pull it promptly in pieces and "condemn it to rubbage and ruin"; as well as of the historical and biographical sketches or "characters," which are well known to all readers of the

*Reliquiæ* and of Wotton's detached pieces. Among these the *Character of Robert, Earl of Salisbury* (printed in an appendix from the Burley MS and the State Papers) may safely be included; Wotton esteemed no man more than Essex's successful rival. Nothing is so characteristic at once of the eager curiosity of Wotton's mind and of the "divided duty" which it was constantly keeping in view, than the fact that few writers of mark in our literature should have left behind them so few basketfuls of fragments—the exception of his letters only proving the rule. The wonder is—but for the *nescio quid* of hopefulness which seems inseparable from any kind of authorship—that either he or those who knew him best and admired him most should have ever thought him likely to write a historical *opus magnum*. Of his contemplated *History of Venice* (which, before her archives were thrown open to the use of students, no foreigner had better opportunities of writing than he) nothing seems to have been accomplished by him but the dedication and a fragment, about a page in length, concerning the origin of the city, reprinted by Mr Smith from the *Reliquiæ*, with the more than usual significant note *Cetera desunt*.

In his later days, Wotton was charged with the execution of an even more delicate, if less comprehensive task; for in 1629 Charles I, in consideration of an augmentation of Wotton's pension from 200*l.* to 500*l.*, commissioned him with the composition of an *English History*—100*l.* of the augmented pension to be paid over by him to such amanuensis or clerk as he should employ on the work. Whether the augmented or, for that matter, the unaugmented, pension was ever



paid remains uncertain; but the History was never written. Before entering "into the description of others' actions and fortunes—which require a free spirit"—Wotton humbly requested the King to reserve for him, towards the discharge of his debts, "some small proportion" of the income of the Mastership of the Rolls, of which Buckingham had induced him to renounce the reversion, and to appoint him to "the next good Deanery." The last word reminds us of a project—for the execution of which one would not have scrupled to sacrifice the *History of England from Henry VIII onwards*—Wotton's contemplated Life of Donne, to which Mr Gosse refers in his own admirable biography of the great Dean of St Paul's. It is pleasant to indulge in the belief that this design, together, perhaps, with much that passed in conversation between the two friends in council, led to the execution of Izaak Walton's biographical portrait of Wotton's early intimate.

There remain—but, as already suggested, this remainder covers many shortcomings—Wotton's Letters, and with them what has come down to us of his "Table-Talk." The aphorisms, to which reference has been made above, may, in Mr Smith's opinion, safely be regarded as notes taken by some one in the Ambassador's house at Venice; they are too largely political to be likely to date from the Eton days, and have not much savour of the saintly sage whom Izaak Walton has pictured to us, and of whose sayings he has preserved several congenial examples. It is the familiar converse of a younger, more active, and more critically observant period of Wotton's life, in surroundings

admirably described in the biography before us, when he was the centre of an almost collegiate sodality of younger men—the *attachés* of his embassy—ready to listen with respect to the “modern instances” even more than to the wise reflexions of their chief; “*in summa*,” as one of them writes, “we live happily, merrily, and honestly; let State businesses go as they will, we follow our studies hard and love one another.”

In Wotton's letters, as in the talk of his earlier days, it would be useless to seek to distinguish between the “private” and the “public” elements in his correspondence. King James' diplomatists, whose primary purpose was after all to please their sovereign, studied his liking for an amalgam of such wit and wisdom as they could command, and fashioned accordingly their “relations” (a mixture of despatch and newsletter), of which the tradition has only in these days of telegrams quite died out in the Chanceries of Europe. Thus, not only the semi-official letters which Wotton prepared with special care for his master's own eye and signed “Ottavio Baldi” (the name borne by him in that secret mission from the Grand Duke Ferdinand of Tuscany to King James VI of Scotland, which had resulted in Wotton's entering the King's service after James' accession to the English Throne), but his despatches to Cecil and other Secretaries, and to his colleagues at the Hague and elsewhere, are interspersed with the witticisms which fill his private correspondence. Now nothing pales and, except when tempered with humour, nothing tires like wit; and, as Wotton's wit was part of his nature, and had been assiduously cultivated by him through life, while his humour was a plant of slower growth, which

never fully unfolded itself till under the autumn sun of his years of tranquillity, we think that it is in his later letters rather than in the whole body of them that he deserves the tribute of supreme literary excellence which Mr Smith pays to him as a letter-writer. This is not intended to deny for a moment the excellence of many of the earlier letters, or their uniform brightness of style, due to an extraordinary versatility of mind; to a clearness in the statement of opinion, and of likes and dislikes, which partakes of the "New" rather than the old Diplomacy<sup>1</sup>; to an insight into men as well as things, and that love of character-study which was one of the tendencies of the age; to the gift of being able to make constant and apt use of the reading at the writer's command, and of idiomatic phrases from the languages at his disposal<sup>2</sup>, and to the wit aforesaid, rarely futile, though occasionally unfair<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Wotton was a first-rate hater, and to whisper to him the word "Jesuit," at any time, was to apply the needle to the gun.

<sup>2</sup> His Latin quotations are few, but to the point; in Italian proverbial philosophy he is thoroughly at home; and he is well seen in French, where it is amusing to meet with such long-lived friends as *l'appétit vient en mangeant*. In his native language, he repeatedly comes near to a touch recalling that of Shakespeare or that of Ben Jonson.

<sup>3</sup> His contempt for the poor player (see the wellknown letter on the burning of the Globe Theatre) is unpleasant, though common to members of "society" in his age; and his analysis of the spirit of the Addled Parliament and its four imprisoned Members belongs to the sort of sarcasm which recoils upon its author. On the other hand, what could be better than the comparison of the contention between the Emperor Ferdinand II and the Winter-king to "the disputation between Job and his friends, whereof the divines note that one side did carry a good cause ill, and the other an ill cause well";



The two supreme occasions of his life in which Wotton exerted his powers of epigram, did not, curiously enough, bring forth any result of great excellence. The first, to be sure, owes its celebrity to chance skilfully used to the author's disadvantage by a Jesuit "gladiator," who, in this instance at least, proved himself a deft *retiarius*. The Latin sentence which Wotton wrote in the album of his Augsburg host, and which Scioppius bruited through Europe, so that it came to the ear of King James, derived more point than it can be said to have originally possessed from his punning English version: "An ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for his country." But, even so, it must be described as flippant rather than witty. In any case, such as it is, it may claim to be original; Scioppius gave it immortality; and it was not the kind of good thing likely to escape the conscious or unconscious plagiarist without necessarily gaining in the process<sup>1</sup>.

or the comparison of himself (addressed to Buckingham), when he had been superseded at Venice and was left without means of subsistence at home, to one of "those seal-fishes, which sometimes, as they say, oversleeping themselves in an ebbing-water, feel nothing about them but a dry shore when they awake." For wit of a humbler character see the story in one of the *Eton* letters, dated 1635, of the fortunate man who "kept his bed."

<sup>1</sup> It may, as has been remarked, have been originally suggested by the Shakespearean phrase "spies of the time," which, with the addition "honourable," Jonson in *Catiline* applies to Ambassadors, and which Wotton himself afterwards applied as what he called an "old Kentish" phrase. Massinger seems to allude to Wotton's epigram in *The Renegado* and in *The Maid of Honour* (Act I, sc. i, in both), and Dryden cites it in his *Dedication of the Æneis*. Finally, from the *Memoirs* of one of the most accomplished and resourceful diplomatists of modern times we take the following anecdote: "On

The case is different with the epitaph composed by Wotton for himself<sup>1</sup>, and thus translated by Walton:

Here lies the first author of this Sentence: The Itch of Disputation will prove the Scab of the Church. (It should have been "Churches.")

This, as Walton allows, may not have been Wotton's own invention, though, as Mr Smith points out, it has never been traced back further than Wotton's own tract, *Plausus et Vota* (1633); and "reason, mixed with charity," should, as the pious biographer says, forgive such a slip of memory at such a time. To later generations, the phraseology of the sentence must seem incongruous with the dignity of an epitaph. But it testified, however imperfectly, to Wotton's firm belief that true religion is born, not out of theological argument, and the factiousness which it engenders, but out of the simple and noble conduct of life. In Wotton himself, as in Fra Paolo, whom he admired above all other men, doctrinal controversy was the least part of the great struggle in which they had their share.

The bulk of Sir Henry Wotton's works (though not quite in the same sense in which Charles Lamb asserted

one occasion, when Count S— was dining with Count Beust, and he and others were discussing the good and bad elements which go to make up a typical ambassador, he wittily remarked, *Mon Dieu, Monsieur le Comte, la diplomatie est l'art de mentir facilement et impunément.*" (*Memoirs of Count Beust*, translated by Baron H. de Worms, I, Introd. I.)

<sup>1</sup> We do not refer to his observation on leaving England for his third embassy to Venice in 1620, as reported by his persistent back-biter Chamberlain to Carleton, "that he doth not now owe one peny in England"—"which one of his friends standing by said would be an excellent epitaph, if he could leave it on his monument."

this of his writings preserved in Leadenhall Street) consists of his professional, i.e. diplomatic, Reports; and we wish we had space to note, at the hand of so careful a biographer as Mr Smith, how assiduously and single-mindedly the future Ambassador prepared himself for his profession. Family traditions pointed the way to it; his training at Oxford, under the eminent civilist Alberico Gentili, who had not long before published the most important book hitherto written on the functions, qualifications, and rights of Ambassadors, laid the foundation of attainments which the English Universities at the time took pains to foster; and foreign travel, with a sojourn in more than one foreign University (more especially at Geneva, where he settled down for a time with Casaubon), supplied him, as it supplied many contemporaries, afterwards eminent as politicians, with the necessary preliminary experience. But, as this period is covered by his letters to his elder brother Edward (afterwards Lord Wotton, and a convert to the Church of Rome), and to Lord Zouche (one of his associates at the University of Altdorf), which are well known to readers of the *Reliquiæ*, we pass it by, together with the stormy episode of his connexion with Essex, in whose expeditions to Cadiz and the Azores, as well (as has been seen) in his unlucky Irish experiences, the young adventurer participated.

After he had broken with Essex, while it was still time, Wotton once more found his way to Italy; and it was only thanks to a bold venture—the mission which, in 1601, he undertook under a feigned name, to warn the King of Scotland of an assassination plot directed against his sacred person—that he could once more look



forward to being employed in the English diplomatic service. So early as December 1597, he had been in correspondence with Cecil as to a plan (which came to nothing) of joining him with John Wroth (who was actually sent) in a mission to the Protestant Princes of Germany; but, in May 1603, we find him writing to Cecil, offering him his services, as if the connexion with Essex, who had a foreign policy, and almost a Foreign Office, of his own, ought to have done him no harm with the discreet Secretary. With pleasing candour (or at least the assumption of it), he dwells on "the duty of fidelity," which he owed to the person of his late master "while he lived, and the duty to his memory after death," significantly reminding Cecil that between him and Essex "there was no personal unkindness." In any case, either Wotton's engaging frankness towards the powerful Minister, or the King's liking for the personality of "Ottavio Baldi," stood him in good stead; and little more than a year later (July 1604) we find him, again from Venice, but this time as accredited Ambassador there, beginning, according to the method of the age, his official correspondence with his brother diplomatist, Sir Ralph Winwood, at the Hague.

Sir Henry Wotton, like most politicians who are not born members of the "twenty-four ancient Houses of Venice" (and even these had in his day come to find their descent more of a disqualification than a recommendation for the Dogeship), had to make his way in public life against many obstacles, including that of a perennially insufficient income. It cannot be denied that he was borne up in the struggle by many high and rare qualities besides his vivacity of intellect and a versatility

of tastes which, at Venice at least (for he was never happy in Holland, and quite unsuccessful in Germany), enabled him, as a diplomatist should, to enter into the whole life of the place, from the pictures in the palaces to the duck-shooting on the Lagoons. Wotton was possessed of a high courage, of which the roots lay in unfaltering religious conviction, and from which was derived a tenacity able at times to prevail even against the irresolution of his sovereign. In his methods, he was, it is to be feared, quite as unscrupulous as any of his colleagues and competitors. The intercepting of interesting letters, whether of Jesuit or other authorship, and the kidnapping of obnoxious personages, were expedients in the ordinary line of the diplomacy of his day; even when on his way home from his last Venetian embassy, he communicated to the Secretary of State a design for "snatching up" a printer named Flavius, "who printed long since that filthy false libel *de Corona Regia*" (one of Scioppius' amenities to the address of King James). Only now and then, he was inconvenienced in such transactions by anything in the nature of a scruple, as when he declined to have anything to say to an offer by one of the *bravi* who swarmed at Venice, to assassinate the fugitive Earl of Tyrone, unless his Majesty should be pleased to command him to proceed further in the matter. In the case of an outlaw of a different sort, the notorious pirate Ward (who had sent a message to the Signoria: "Tell those flatcaps who have been the occasion of my being banished out of my own country that, before I have done with them, I will make them sue me for my pardon"), Wotton was prepared to recommend either a bargain, or the acceptance of the offer

of an English sailor, formerly one of Ward's crew, to find out the pirate, kill him, and burn his ships.

Yet some of the drawbacks to Wotton's success as a diplomatist lay in himself. His zeal occasionally outran itself in both great things and small—in the anti-papal propaganda which he almost openly carried on at Venice, and in such a piece of folly as the conveyance of the Milanese Jesuit Cerronio to England, whence he seems to have returned again, his budget of strange and secret information not having been found "worth the whistling." Wotton's impetuosity not only drove him into difficulties out of which he afterwards had to extricate himself *tant bien que mal*, but it also made him a marked man among those to whose interests his policy was opposed, and above all unable to do anything at Rome. This was shown in the case of John Mole, who, having translated some works of Duplessis-Mornay containing reflexions on "Babylon" and "Antichrist," was arrested by order of the Inquisition, and died in prison, after a confinement of thirty years. Wotton seems, also, to have excited distrust and suspicion in English friends and fellow-diplomatists well acquainted with him, such as his cousin Anthony Bacon, and his fellow-secretary Reynolds, in the days of his service with Essex, and, again, his fellow-diplomatist Carleton, whose correspondence with Chamberlain is, in Mr Smith's words, "full of innuendos and vague accusations against Wotton, or 'Fabritio,' as they call him." Of course, professional jealousy was at the bottom of much of this; but it is sad to think that so patriotic a servant of his King, so pious and high-minded a Christian, and so "easy" a "philosopher" among his books and pictures, should



have suffered so much from the corroding influences of the courtier's life.

The ambassadorial services of Wotton, which Mr Smith has for the first time surveyed with the necessary amplitude and illustrated by a sufficient selection from his diplomatic correspondence, extended over three periods of office at Venice (September 1604 to December 1610; May 1616 to May 1619; and March 1621 to October 1623), together with special missions to Savoy, the States-General, and the German Courts. Of these periods of service, by far the most important, and that which gave the tone to the rest, was his first embassy at Venice, which marked the renewal of diplomatic intercourse between the two States. Although Venice had not recovered the position which she held in Europe before the League of Cambray, her Government, as that of a self-governed Constitutional polity, at home still stood, strong and firm, *super antiquas vias*, and, in her foreign policy, she contrived, with fair success, to depend upon the alliances secured to her by the efforts of her diplomacy for covering that loss of actual strength which she could never expect to make good. Both the Turkish peril and the determination of the power of Spain, closely allied with the Austrian Habsburgs, over all the rest of Italy, obliged the Venetians to seek the friendship of those Powers whose policy was adverse to that of the Habsburg House—of France, of the Protestant Princes of Germany, and of Protestant England. The policy of Venice was thus, almost as a matter of course, anti-Papal; and, though the movement against Rome, which was the very essence of the "plan" or "system" of Fra Paolo (Sarpi), was political rather

than religious in its origin, it soon assumed both aspects; and the development of the design of uniting Protestant Europe, under the headship of King James, in a great anti-Papal League went hand in hand with the progress of the conflict between Venice and the Papacy.

Wotton, though at the time engaged in one of those trade disputes with Venice which belonged to the routine of his ambassadorial work, threw himself heart and soul into this conflict; and, notwithstanding that its settlement, in a sense mainly favourable to Venice, was actually brought about by the astute intervention of Henry IV in the person of Cardinal Joyeuse, he was justified in claiming for James I a share in this satisfactory result. According to Venetian usage, the Ambassador's dealings with the Government of the Republic were limited to his formal audiences in the Collegio, a Committee composed of the Doge and twenty-five leading Senators, by which all matters of foreign policy were discussed, and which Wotton aptly calls the "stomach of the State<sup>1</sup>." His speeches on these occasions, according to Mr Smith, testify to his skill, elegance, and wit as a speaker of Italian. Private interviews with any foreign Ambassador were prohibited to Venetians of senatorial rank except in quite special instances; hence the importance attaching to Wotton's private interviews with Sarpi, over which a deep veil of secrecy had to be thrown.

It was, then, in the Collegio that, on September 5, 1606, Wotton, instructed by Salisbury to convey to the

<sup>1</sup> Sarpi told Dohna that it was preferable to have agents rather than Ambassadors from Protestant Princes in Venice, as the Ambassadors were so strictly watched.

Doge the King's promise of assistance in the struggle with the Pope, though limited by the conditions formulated by the Secretary in the words, "that it shall be at all times as far as the state of the King's own affairs shall let him," had committed the boldest indiscretion of his life. But the spirit which dictated his communication to the Collegio, the courage with which it was made, and the effect which it unmistakably exercised, raised it far beyond the level of an indiscretion. Without passing over the restrictive clause added by the Secretary, the Ambassador had made a definite offer of the King of England's assistance, "with all his counsels, friends and forces both terrestrial and maritime, sincerely and seriously"; and the Republic had at once accepted the offer as it stood, and thanked the King for his "heroic resolution." It is true that Salisbury had hereupon done his best to draw the King out of his engagement, and that, as to his headship of a Protestant League, Wotton, who had again brought the proposal before the Collegio, was obliged to confess that he had not been authorised by the King to make it. But the immediate effect of the September Declaration had been indisputable; and, as Spain wished for peace, Henry IV had seized the opportunity of bringing it about on terms which were a substantial triumph for the "system" of Sarpi. The "style" in which it was sought to take vengeance upon Fra Paolo himself is well known, as is Wotton's own portrait drawn in later days, of

a great canonist, which was the title of his ordinary service with the State; and certainly in the time of the Pope's interdict they had their principal light from him. When he was either reading or writing alone, his manner was to sit fenced



with a castle of paper about his chair and overhead; for he was of our Lord of St Alban's opinion, that all air is predatory, and especially hurtful when the spirits are most employed. You will find a scar in his face, that was from a Roman assassinate that would have killed him as he was turned to a wall near to his convent; and, if there were not a greater Providence about us, it might often have been easily done, especially upon such a weak and wearyish body.

After the settlement, Wotton, whose Venetian letters of this time reveal those high spirits which take hold of courageous men in full action—not only on the field of battle—was eager to carry on the struggle. Early in 1609, he forwarded to King James through Francesco Biondi propositions of “Maestro Paolo” for aggressive action against the Papacy, and for the introduction of Religious Reform into Italy. The former was to be carried out by a combination with those German Princes in whose counsels at this time an unprecedented activity obtained, and who, if they but followed the eager advice of Christian of Anhalt, would not be found wanting at the critical hour—*car il faut que nous entreaydions pour détruire et démolir Babilon*. We have already hinted that Mr Smith might have made more abundant use than he has thought necessary of the documents edited by Ritter, which illustrate the relations between the German and the Venetian movements in this period. Wotton was in direct contact with Christoph von Dohna the Palatine Councillor and agent; and, while the French Ambassador, De Fresne-Canaye, was plying his English colleague with warlike proposals, the latter suggested to Salisbury, “out of his own weak judgment,” that James might easily manage to involve Henry IV in an Italian War, and thus “kindle such a work as will not

easily end till the day of Christ, whose work indeed it is."

Meanwhile the religious propaganda had been deliberately set on foot. A French Protestant, named Papillon, was collecting adhesions to (and subscriptions for) the scheme of a religious congregation with a Pastor of its own; and Wotton's Chaplain, William Bedell, was translating the English Liturgy into Italian for the use of this congregation, to which already, by the end of 1607, the Genevan Protestant Pastor, Giovanni Diodati, had begun to minister. James's vanity, as well as his principles, made him specially anxious to intervene in this part of the work; and, in March 1607, two boxes containing copies of the King's *Apologia pro Juramento Fidelitatis* had arrived as his contribution to the propaganda. Wotton, though he had not been able to circulate them without difficulty, asked for more of both the King's and other books of little purport—Jewell's *Apology* in particular. A year later, we find him impressing upon the King anew the importance of such efforts; but, notwithstanding their and Bedell's assiduity, this part of the scheme was foredoomed to die a natural death; for, as observed above, it was not the question of religious dogma which divided Venice into *Papalini* and patriots, and no Corpus Christi procession there had ever been more splendid than that which took place during the Interdict.

About a year after Wotton's return home from his first Venetian embassy, the royal favour which he had gained was manifested by his being sent on a special mission to Turin, to which he had paid a visit (either by the King's orders or of his own initiative) on his way

back to England. The mission, which crossed the Alps in the spring of 1612, was one of great state; and at Turin the Ambassador and his suite were overwhelmed "with infinite honours and entertainments." For the business in hand was nothing less than the realisation of part of a double marriage scheme with the Court of Savoy, at which Wotton had been for some time at work, but of which the other half—a match between the Princess Elizabeth and the Prince of Piedmont—had fallen through; happily, if one calls to mind the English Succession question of later days. The proposal to marry Henry Prince of Wales to the Infanta Maria, who was believed to be well-disposed towards the Religion, was, however, still open, or seemed to be so. Mr Smith appears to us to be wholly right in his view (which controverts that of the late Dr Gardiner) that Wotton's endeavour to knit an alliance with Charles Emmanuel "the Great" of Savoy was made wholly with the view of advancing the cause of Protestantism in Italy. But it was out of Wotton's power to follow the alternating phases in the policy of Charles Emmanuel, who, since the death of Henry IV, had veered from the French alliance to a *rapprochement* towards Spain, and had then been again alienated from Spain by the Montferrat Succession quarrel; while in his negotiations with the German Protestant Princes, who constantly dangled before his eyes the prospect of the Imperial Crown, there was never much reality.

In the matter of Wotton's mission, however, its inevitable failure was due rather to James I than to Charles Emmanuel; for how could the Duke be expected to join a League against Spain and at the same



time consent to a matrimonial alliance which, as the Ambassador had to explain to him, could not take place without Spanish sanction. The tortuous policy of Charles Emmanuel was confronted by the even more incalculable duplicity of James I; and the whole project collapsed. Wotton's diplomatic credit had, though without his own fault, suffered from the negotiation; and, as fate would have it, just about this time his unfortunate Augsburg saw, about Ambassadors and their duties, reached the King's ears. The death of Salisbury, to whom, before his temporary disgrace, Wotton had been thought as a possible successor, had deprived him of a good friend; and after, about 1611, fortune had bid fair to smile on Sir Henry as it had never shone before, his evil star seemed to be once more in the ascendant. However, it was not long before the royal favour was restored to him—perhaps because of a temperate but effective speech which he had made as a Member of the Addled Parliament, asserting the right of the Crown (as hereditary) to levy impositions on merchandise.

In the summer of 1614, he was sent out on another special mission, this time to the Hague. He was to try his best, in conjunction with the statesmen of the Dutch Republic and the diplomatic representatives of France, to settle the Jülich-Cleves controversy—that “great nightmare of history,” Mr Smith calls it, reminding one of Disraeli's comparison of it in the House of Commons to the sister nightmare of the Schleswig-Holstein question. It had reached an acute stage after, in 1613, one of the two “possessing” Princes, Wolfgang Wilhelm of Neuburg, had become a Catholic and

claimed the protection of the Catholic League. We are unable here to review the efforts of the "peace-loving" Ambassador, as Mr Smith not very felicitously calls Wotton—efforts of which the course is summed up by Wotton himself in a letter printed in the *Reliquiæ*. Their actual result, however, may be epitomised as the conclusion of a Treaty (that of Xanten) which the rulers of the Spanish Netherlands were manifestly resolved not to allow to be carried into execution, while James I consented to its being deprived of even such force as it possessed. Although Wotton finally induced James to relieve him from the responsibility, unjustly laid upon the English Ambassador, of having brought about the loss of Wesel, it is clear that, however decorous in his expressions, he was very much disgusted with the whole business. Possibly, as Mr Smith suggests, a diplomatist accustomed to the slow and smooth procedure of Venetian negotiations felt (if the expression be appropriate) like a fish out of water in Holland; but, if there was any awkwardness in the agent, there was in his master a weakness which, on this occasion at all events, approached the contemptible.

We must, perforce, be extremely brief in touching on the remainder of Wotton's diplomatic career. Yet his second embassy at Venice (we omit any reference to his first visit to the Palatine Court at Heidelberg, and the fresh failure of the attempt to establish a working Alliance between Savoy and the German Protestant Princes) was hardly less successful than his first; and it includes one of the most interesting and, till of late at all events, obscurest episodes in Venetian history—the

story of the so-called "Spanish Plot" of 1618. On his return to Venice in 1616, Wotton had resolved on keeping quiet, and living *più da filosofo che da cortigiano*; and he had found the Venetians themselves far less eager for the prosecution of Religious Reforms than anxious about the preservation of the security of the Commonwealth. France and Spain were now on friendly terms; and though—or perhaps because—the Spanish Government itself was weak, its Italian Viceroy, both at Milan and at Naples, dreaming maybe of a partition of the central authority, were intent upon increasing their power at the expense of those Italian States which had retained their independence. Out of this general situation was born that "Spanish Plot," of which Mr Horatio Brown, in his excellent short *History of Venice*, gives a sufficient account. Ranke, with his usual acumen, had divined its real character when he observed that, if the word "Plot" implies a distinct combination for the definite purpose of a design to be executed in a particular way at a particular day and hour, then this was no plot. If, on the other hand, the word expresses no more than a general understanding and the preparation of the necessary machinery by persons intending to conclude a more definite agreement as to details of execution, then this design amounted to a plot, which the Venetians nipped in the bud.

The Viceroy of Naples, the Duke of Ossuna, had conceived the idea of overrunning Venice with his fleet; and this project, after it had been betrayed to the Signoria by the Frenchman, Jacques Pierre, had not died out after this betrayal, Pierre still keeping up his



communications with Ossuna. It is not easy, if it be possible, to decide whether there was an understanding between Ossuna, whose schemes ended in inaction, and the Marquis de Bedmar, the Spanish Ambassador at Venice, who certainly planned the seizure of the Venetian town of Crema by the Viceroy of Milan, Don Pedro di Toledo, and who was obliged to quit Venice on the discovery of the "Plot," or whether, as seems more probable, each of the two Viceroys was acting on his own account. Another element of difficulty lies in the absence of any documentary evidence showing how Ossuna kept up his communications with the plotters at Venice, and how he obtained information of the discovery of his designs.

In reply to the latter question, an interesting attempt was made not long ago<sup>1</sup> to prove that Ossuna's familiar, the celebrated Spanish writer Quevedo, whose great design of undoing the wealth of Venice by diverting her Levant trade to Brindisi was broached in 1628, resided at Venice during the period preceding the discovery and at the time of the discovery itself. But, though Dr Eysenhardt has thrown much light upon the subject by giving wider publicity to two documents unknown to Ranke—a despatch from Bedmar to Philip III, and a protocol of the sitting of the Spanish Council at which Bedmar was recalled—he cannot be said to have succeeded in proving Quevedo's sojourn in Venice. This assump-

<sup>1</sup> See *Die Verschwörung gegen Venedig im Jahre 1618* (*Sammlung gemeinverst. wissenschaftl. Vorträge*, No. 56), Hamburg, 1858. The documents referred to in the text were first made public by Fernandez-Guerra-y-Orbe.

tion rests solely on the (rather foolish) biography of Quevedo by his nephew, C. A. de Tarsin, printed in 1662, twenty years after Quevedo's death, and thirty-four after the events in question. And the attempt to connect Quevedo's supposed presence in Venice with the famous Foscarini case (in which the Council of the Ten confessed having been deceived into a tragic miscarriage of justice), and even with the affairs of Lady Arundel (a Catholic by birth, like her convert husband), in which Wotton played a rather sorry part, cannot be described as more than an ingenious fancy.

Apart from this business, Wotton, fortunately for himself, stood in no relation to the Plot or its disclosures. In his own picturesque language, the Republic was "artificially kept at excessive charge by a mad Viceroy and a winking Pope, the King of Spayne, in the meanwhile, standing at the benefit of time or fortune, ready to authorise or disavow the event according to the success." His own activity during his second embassy enjoyed the constant goodwill of the Venetian authorities, and did much to keep up the good understanding with the Republic which, both at the time and in the long run, could not but benefit England's political influence and commercial interest. James I, about this time, allowed English ships to enter the Venetian service, besides equipping a fleet himself; and after, in 1608, an English Consul by the English merchants at Venice, his successor was nominated by Wotton and the Trinity House. Nor was the religious question altogether shelved. To this period belongs the design of a Protestant College at Sondrio in the

Valtelline, which, as Wotton hoped (though with some misgivings whether as many "instruments" would be found for the propagation of "truth" as for that of "untruth"), might beat the Jesuits on their own ground by sending forth agents into the Protestant States of Italy. The plan, which had the approval of Bacon, was in 1610 communicated to the Protestant Princes of the Union; but they, as Gardiner rather severely says, "had no time to spare for such solemn trifling."

Wotton's negotiations in Germany, on this and on more pressing subjects, during his homeward journey from Venice, in the summer of 1610, came to no result; but there is nothing to show that, on his return, he received a cold welcome from King James, as had been confidently predicted by Chamberlain. When, in July, he once more set forth for Venice, he was charged with an extraordinary embassy on his way, to no less a personage than the Emperor Ferdinand II. The situation, critical in the highest degree for the King and Queen of Bohemia, and for the cause of German Protestantism, is perhaps a little crudely stated by Mr Smith (it is surely a curious way of putting it to say that, "as a legitimate King," Ferdinand "doubted the validity of Frederick's election"). But there can be no doubt as to the absolute correctness of the remark that "it would be difficult to imagine a more hopeless errand" than Wotton's embassy, and it certainly "mattered little that he was by no means the right instrument for such an employment." The catastrophe of Prague overtook the mission; and, though, by way of a compliment to King James, the Emperor suspended the case against the



Winter-king for more than two months, the English Ambassador's protest against the invasion of the Palatinate was laid *ad acta*. Izaak Walton's story of Wotton's handing over to the wife of his Viennese host the Emperor's parting gift of a jewel must be taken for what it is worth—which is very little, since, as Mr Smith shows, it was customary for Ambassadors, if their requests were not granted, to refuse or leave behind them the gifts invariably offered to them before their departure.

Wotton's third embassy to Venice, which began with a poor reception, resented by the returning Ambassador with no measured display of wrath, proved comparatively uneventful. Among the chief political questions with which it had to concern itself were those of the troubles, boding so much ill to Venice that the Collegio would have welcomed English interference, and of the Spanish Marriages, whereby any such interference was rendered hopeless. On the other hand, the danger threatening Venice from the Grisons was quite sufficient to prevent the authorities from replying by anything beyond "a great deal of good language" to Wotton's solicitations for money to enable Mansfeld to keep in the field an army in the service of the Elector Palatine; and the cause of that unfortunate Prince and Wotton's high-spirited "Mistress" sank more and more into a forlorn hope. In addition to lesser personal troubles, Wotton was overwhelmed by the death, in 1623, of the man whom he revered above all others, whose intimacy with him had been the profoundest inspiration of his life, and with whose death all his hopes of carrying on the work, so dear to them

both, of Religious Reform in Italy must have come to an end<sup>1</sup>.

Of Wotton's years of retirement at Eton nothing more need be said on this occasion, if only because the narrative of his "decline" (as most men would call it) is enshrined for ever in the immortal pages of Izaak Walton. In his letters and recorded conversation of this period the echoes of his diplomatic life and its aspirations are few, apart from his Letters to the Queen of Bohemia and her faithful John Dyneley. But Wotton's withdrawal from public affairs had not dulled his interest in them; and, though it was from spiritual motives—at least chiefly such—that he had become an ordained Minister of the Prince of Peace, he could record, without any attempt to veil his contentment in clerical phrase, that "the King of Sweden hath landed, with 200 ships, a great army of some 40,000 in Germany, with intention (if the party of our religion be not all drowsy) to redress the common cause." And, a little later, he could rejoice at the tidings of the conclusion of the League of Heilbronn between some of the Circles of the Empire and the Swedes, and declare his conviction that "war itself is a great refiner of spirits in little time." He lived to witness, in 1638, the overthrow of the warlike hopes of the Queen of Bohemia's eldest surviving son and his brother Rupert; and to the cause of the Palatine House he might have applied, as he did to that of the Scottish troubles, the consolatory verse, "*Est bene non potuit*

<sup>1</sup> It is a pleasing fancy of Mr Smith that the device *Esto perpetua*, which is not known to have been used as the Eton motto before 1635 (when Wotton was Provost), was chosen by him, as suggested by the dying prayer of Fra Paolo for his native city.

*dicere; dixit: Erit.*" The generous spirit of hope which remained with him to the end (for he died, as we now have it on Sir Maxwell Lyte's authority, on December 5th, 1639) is not less characteristic of Sir Henry Wotton's last days than the tranquil cheerfulness which is known to have pervaded them. Neither side of his complex nature should be ignored; but it is the former which his last biographer's researches into the story of his active life have illustrated with unexpected freshness and fulness.

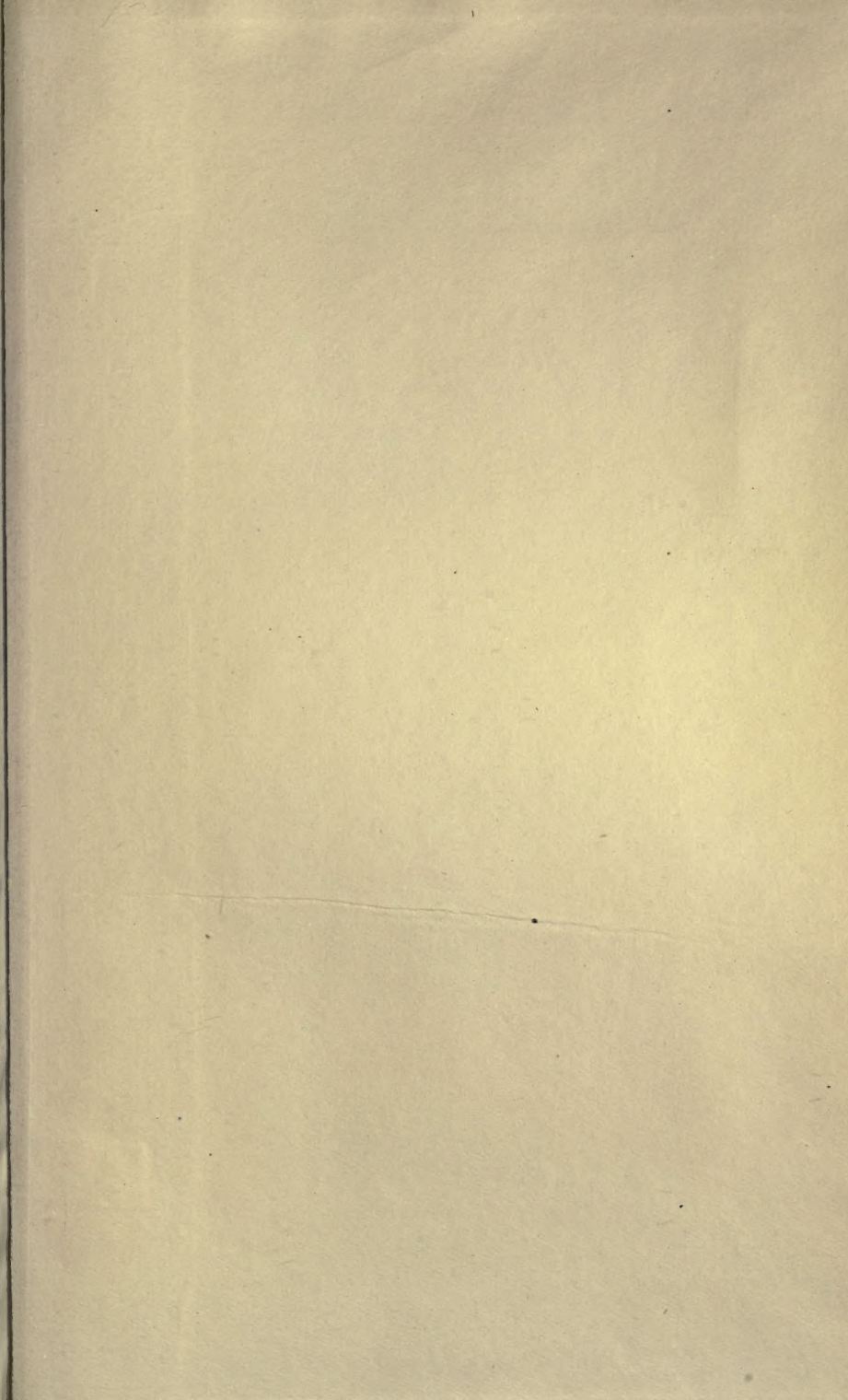
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